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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The Tea Party Spirit

by Charles R. Kesler

Sometimes the most obvious derangements of our politics are staring us in the face but we don't see them. Take, for instance, the health care reform bill for which President Obama and the Democrats are forever lusting. Many people have protested it isn't really a *reform* bill, because reform implies improvement and this isn't an improvement.

But it isn't the "reform" part of the Democrats' health care bill (if they ever agree on one) that strikes me as most perverse. It's calling this voluminous monstrosity a *bill*. Can you have a bill, a single law, that is almost 3,000 pages long? In the old days, that would have constituted a whole code of laws. When our founders thought about law, they often thought along the lines of John Locke, who described law as a community's "settled standing rules, indifferent, and the same to all parties," emphasizing that to be legitimate a statute must be "received and allowed by common consent to be the standard of right and wrong, and the common measure to decide all controversies" between citizens.

This phonebook-sized law that would control a sixth of the U.S. economy cannot be a law by that definition. If you rummage through the text of, say, the House of Representatives' version of the bill, you find scores of places where power is delegated to administrative agencies and special boards, which are charged to fill the gaps in the written legislation by promulgating thousands, if not tens of thousands, of new pages of regulations that will then be applied to individual cases. Voters sometimes complain that legislators don't read the laws they enact. Why would they, in this case? You could read this leviathan until your eyeballs popped out and still not find any "settled, standing rules" or a meaning that is "indifferent, and the same to all parties."

In fact, that's the point of such promiscuous laws. They operate not by setting up fences to protect each man's liberty. They start not from equal rights but from equal (and often unequal) privileges, the favors or benefits that government may bestow on or withhold from its clients. The whole point is to empower government officials, usually unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats, to bless or curse your petitions as they see fit, guided, of course, by their expertness in a law so vast, so intricate, and so capricious that it could justify a hundred different outcomes in the same case. Faster than one might think, a government of equal laws turns into a regime of arbitrary privileges.

A "privilege" is literally a private law. When law ceases to be a common "standard of right and wrong" and a "common measure to decide all controversies," then the rule of law ceases to be republican and becomes despotic. Freedom itself ceases to be a right and becomes a gift, or the fruit of a corrupt bargain, because in such degraded regimes those who are close to and connected with the ruling class have special privileges.

It was against the threat of such a despotism that proper and not so proper Bostonians threw the original Tea Party. The English East India Company was about to go bankrupt, and the British government bailed it out by passing the Tea Act of 1773, granting the Company's agents a monopoly on selling tea to Americans and filling the government's own coffers by taxing the sales. The Americans had already rejected this tax as unconstitutional in 1767, but it stayed on the books. Among the Company's agents in Massachusetts were the royal governor's two sons and a nephew. They didn't call it Chicago-style politics then, but the principles were the same.

Today's Tea Party movement sees a similar threat of despotism—of monopoly control of health care, corrupting bailouts, massive indebtedness, and the eclipse of constitutional rights—in the Obama Administration's policies. The Tea Party patriots may mistake the President's motives when they compare him to King George. But they are right to suspect in the very nature of modern liberalism and the modern state something hostile to the consent of the governed and to constitutional liberty. The republic will owe them a debt of gratitude if Obama's plans end up just as wet as George III's, floating in the salty tea pot of Boston Harbor.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Making California Golden Again

I found William Voegeli's cover essay on California to be very incisive and, to be honest, painful ("Failed State," Fall 2009). As he points out, the state's decline has been largely self-inflicted and unnecessary.

My only suggestion would be to put more emphasis on the role of the regulatory system. With the new climate-change related regulation, California essentially is showing how a state—the most blessed by nature in the nation—can undermine its economy. The biggest losers will be the working- and middle-classes whose jobs and homes are threatened.

Unfortunately, there is no way to repossess the large estates and fancy cars of the Google billionaires, non-profit foundations, and Hollywood notables who have financed much of this push to destroy the state's once-amazing productive economy.

Joel Kotkin
Valley Village, CA

William Voegeli's "Failed State" is unrivalled in its dissection of California's ills. But the passive voice in his conclusion hides another liberal weapon. Voegeli writes: "The voters will have to be persuaded that these legitimate demands can only be addressed by electing principled conservatives to public offices both prominent and obscure." The weapon is rotten boroughs. California is gerrymandered into districts that put a Democratic, and hence liberal, lock on the legislature. (The scales will only tip further if illegal immigrants are included in the census.) While the fastest-growing, inland area of the state is also the most conservative, there is little evidence that time will give conservatives a fighting chance.

Ironically, the Progressive tools of direct democracy remain the best bet for California conservatives. In fact, initiatives and referendums are the *only* effective resources conservatives have had in decades. Governor Schwarzenegger rode into office on this idea but fundamentally misunderstood the policy imperatives. Had he been armed with Voegeli's insight, he might have been the Terminator of the worst of the Progressive legacy instead of becoming more collateral damage for liberalism's looting and pillaging of California.

Ken Masugi
Washington, D.C.

William Voegeli does an excellent job of limning California's governance problems, but his ire at Progressive reforms and the large number of governments in the state might be slightly misplaced. One of the Progressive movement's virtuous accomplishments was the direct initiative. Consider what the "tax and spend" advocates would have done if their unrestrained access to property tax revenues had not been curbed by Proposition 13. John G. Matsusaka's careful analysis in *For the Many or the Few: The Initiative, Public Policy, and American Democracy* (2004) clearly reveals lower taxes and less profligate government spending patterns in state and local jurisdictions that are subject to the initiative process. Professional civil service, another legacy of the Progressive era, might have its problems, but is typically free of corruption and is, in any case, vastly preferable to a spoils system. Rolling back the Progressive reforms is probably not the answer to California's problems, and taking away the initiative process would probably not strike most Californians as a good way to rein in excessive government spending.

Reducing the number of local governments by consolidation, which the article seems to imply is a good idea, would likely not make government more efficient or frugal. Suburban municipalities almost always offer higher service levels and lower costs than adjacent large cities, and it is difficult to find anyone who unreservedly sings the praises of large urban or regional school districts. True, California does have more special districts than any other local form of government, but many of these, no matter how low profile, provide a specific service (water, sanitation, etc.), have a clear mission, and can more easily be analyzed and compared than large, multifunction regional governmental entities. Large regional governmental authorities tend to be imperious bureacracies substantially immune from any public pressure at all: think of the Air Quality Management District (AQMD) or the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The average citizen has some realistic opportunity to interact, even if only socially, with a board member of, say, a local water district. How many citizens of Los Angeles County (with a population well over ten million) are likely to bump into one of the five County Supervisors at the local supermarket?

Voegeli is on much more solid ground when he cites specific examples of profligate government spending patterns in California. If the state's government is going to be improved, hard, detailed fiscal analysis is going to illuminate the way for California citizens. Needless to say, this sort of fiscal analysis is not going to come from the government managers who currently guard the relevant fiscal data, or at best disseminate it in carefully crafted, opaque financial documents. For all the reasons Voegeli mentions, they have no incentive to let the public see precisely where tax dollars are going. Independent, critical, detailed fiscal analysis is needed to provide voters with the necessary information to hold elected officials accountable.

Advocating conservative principles may be satisfying to some, but by itself hasn't managed to sway a majority of the California electorate, or even many Republican office-holders, toward requiring more fiscal prudence.

Steven B. Frates
Malibu, CA

William Voegeli's "Failed State" is an elegant analysis of one part of the California mess, but, alas, it omits a large part of what's an even more complicated story than the one he tells. Many of the state's ailments, as Voegeli writes, can be attributed to its Progressive legacy and the hyperdemocracy it has produced. And yes, the public-sector unions too often dominate its political establishment, and especially its Democratic Party. But for the most part the system worked well into the late 1960s or early '70s, producing public services and a governmental system that were models for the nation and, in many cases, for the world: schools, freeways, parks, water projects, and what may still be the greatest public research university on earth.

So what happened to make things go so wrong if it wasn't just the enactment of the state's collec-

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tive bargaining laws? In part it was California's growth itself, creating congestion, pollution, and escalating real estate values. More generally, it was the exhaustion of the excessive post-war optimism that drove that growth and that brought millions of migrants, nearly all of them from other states, to the land of sunshine, surf, palm trees, and cheap development housing, much of it available at low cost with G.I. or FHA loans.

But the disenchantment was also driven, subtly at first, then more obviously, by a different wave of immigrants, Latinos and Asians particularly. Suddenly the new faces weren't WASPs from Iowa or Kansas but Mexicans from Michoacan and Zacatecas, who spoke a different language and brought a new culture. In 1978, Howard Jarvis, co-author of California's property tax-cutting Proposition 13, perhaps the biggest landmark in California's change of direction, famously declared that he was sick of all those "illegal aliens who come here to get on the taxpayers' gravy train."

There's plenty of data, both from other societies and increasingly from California, that cultural or ethnic diversity correlates inversely with taxpayers' willingness to support public goods. When the kids in the schools are, or look like, your kids, you're much more likely to support those schools (or colleges or parks) than if the children are different, especially if many of them aren't here legally in the first place. That should be easy to understand in a state where whites are just another minority and a rapidly shrinking one at that, but where they still constitute about two-thirds of the voters. And because California requires a two-thirds legislative majority to pass a budget and (since Proposition 13) a two-thirds majority to raise taxes (making California the only state to have both), it was easy for legislative minorities, usually Republicans, to block budgets and/or extract concessions from the majority. Because the Democrats (partly serving the unions, but often for more defensible reasons as well) were spenders, the legislature and governor could only resolve the resulting gridlock with borrowing, fudges, deferrals and other gimmicks that pushed the deficits from one year to the next until, in this recession, the gimmicks were all used up. Worse, the state's convoluted fiscal system, much of it created via the initiative process, makes it nearly impossible for voters to know who's accountable.

Yet the voters, while demanding that their representatives do their work and fix things, have imposed ever more restrictions on both their ability and their motivation to do so: tax limits, term limits, spending limits, spending mandates, plus a whole string of initiatives creating billion-dollar programs without providing new funds to pay for them: park land acquisition, high-speed rail, stem-cell research, hospital funding. At the same time, because they don't trust the legislature, they've refused to reform the very system that frustrates them, rejecting ballot measures, both liberal and conservative, that would lift some of those constraints. In effect, they'd rather have the legislature not work than have it respond to the Democrats who control it. Because districts are divided by population, not voters (thus black and Latino districts have many fewer voters than white suburban districts), the legislature corresponds much more closely to the general population, both demographically and politically, than the statewide electorate does—which, of course, is why that electorate so often resorts to the initiative to trump the legislature.

Calling for the election of "principled conservatives," Voegeli has some useful suggestions for Republicans. But the most important was left out. Unless Republicans reach out to Latinos—and to ethnic and social minorities in general—they'll remain a minority in California forever. George W. Bush and Karl Rove understood that. Believing that Latino social conservatism could fit well with at least part of the GOP agenda, they were far more successful in getting Latino votes in Texas than Republicans have been for the past decade in California. At this point, the California Republican Party behaves less like a political party and more like a besieged cultish splinter group not understanding the world that's grown up around it. The state badly needs a strong second party, but at the moment it doesn't have one.

Peter Schrag
Oakland, CA

William Voegeli replies:

I appreciate Joel Kotkin's suggestion to reexamine California's decline with special attention to the prospect of strangulation by regulation. It's a question I'll take up in a future essay, if I can come up with something to say about it that he hasn't already said better in his *Forbes* column, or on Newgeography.com.

Ken Masugi, too, has kind things to say about "Failed State," and interesting things to say about the problem of gerrymandering. Conceding the probability that his understanding of the whole question of drawing legislative districts' boundaries surpasses my own, I'll venture the opinion that gerrymandering does not rank especially high on the list of reasons why conservatives don't play a larger role in shaping public policy in California. I suspect that Democrats do not, in fact, do a particularly thorough job of maximizing their electoral advantages by shrewdly drawing legislative districts. It's not because they're good sports, but because careerist imperatives routinely take precedence over partisan ones. This means that carving out as many safe seats as possible is more important than configuring the map to facilitate the highest number of victories, including narrow ones.

If a majority party had succeeded in making the most of its electoral possibilities by drawing district lines, you would expect to see a lot of elections where the minority party candidates (their most loyal voters clustered together in as few districts as possible) secured a small number of overwhelming victories. Conversely, the majority party candidates (their voters strategically distributed among as many districts as possible) would win a large number of elections by much narrower margins. That appears, however, to be the exact opposite of what happens, at least recently in California. In 2008, for example, 20 of the 40 seats in the state senate were up for election. Democrats won 11 and Republicans won 9. But it was the Democrats who won the landslides. Of the nine Republican victors, the one with the highest percentage of his district's vote received 63%. Of the 11 Democrats, the one who received the *lowest* percentage of the vote got 65%. The nine Republican state senators won, collectively, 57% of the votes cast in their districts; the 11 Democrats won 70%.

I submit that if Masugi and I hacked the state's computers, we would be stymied in our efforts to redraw the state senate district lines to secure even one additional GOP seat. The Republicans in 2008 won 45% of the state senate seats being contested, and 41% of all the popular votes cast in those 20 races. It's hard to see how they were cheated out of their fair allotment of legislators in Sacramento. There are few of us able to resist the temptation to ascribe our failures to forces beyond our control rather than to ones within it. The evidence argues, however, that conservatives hold so little sway in California because they haven't been able to change enough minds, rather than because they haven't been permitted to change enough maps.

I agree with several things that Steven Frates says, but not all of the opinions he reads between the lines of "Failed State." If California did not now have the direct initiative, I would not lead a campaign to establish it. Recognizing the ways it has curtailed governmental metastasis, however, I would not lead a campaign to remove what has been a prominent and often useful part of the state's political toolkit for the past century.

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Similarly, I don't champion "reducing the number of local governments by consolidation." Nor, for that matter, do I champion increasing the number by fragmentation. Getting it right, governmentally, means assigning responsibilities to agencies that would do a worse job if they grew or shrank, either in terms of the number of people they serve or the number of functions they perform. Getting it right, politically, means that governmental units are constituted, geographically and functionally, so that any expansion or contraction would detract from the voters' ability to render an informed and considered judgment of their performance. The best solution to the one problem might differ, slightly or strikingly, from the best solution for the other.

Frates *is* correct, however, to infer that I do not agree with him that the civil service system "is vastly preferable to the spoils system." I didn't relocate from New York City to California in order to revive Tammany Hall beneath the palm trees, and I don't yearn for the day when an election victory will mean Democratic street sweepers are replaced by Republican ones. I do believe, however, that the cause of good government and meaningful democratic engagement would be enhanced if elected officials could fill by appointment many of the positions now in the highest echelons of the life-tenured civil servants. If a mayor or governor is foolish enough to appoint hacks, the people should be smart enough to elect a new mayor or governor. As matters now stand, if the policymakers and implementers in the top ranks of the civil service are doing a poor job, the people's ability to do anything about it, directly or through their elected officials, is negligible.

I'm gratified that Peter Schrag read "Failed State" so closely, since I've enjoyed and profited from his two books on California, *Paradise Lost* and *America's High Stakes Experiment*. The argument in his letter distills the one in his books: the source for both the strength and the weakness of California's Republican Party is its refusal to come to terms with the new multicultural "world that's grown up around it."

Schrag's analysis has its merits, but also its problems. He notes that there's "plenty of data"—some of it from the prominent social scientist Robert Putnam—demonstrating, in Putnam's words, that "people living in ethnically diverse settings appear to 'hunker down'—that is, to pull in like a turtle." Diversity, in sociologese, is negatively correlated with social capital. Homogeneous communities are more amenable to collaboration, trust, and sustaining social welfare programs than heterogeneous ones.

So it's a little jarring when, after signaling that the desire for sociability reinforced by cultural homogeneity is natural and understandable, Schrag's political advice to conservatives sounds so much like, "Get over it." This is particularly true when it comes to the question of illegal immigration. Even two centuries ago, when America was much smaller and less diverse than it is today, the question of forming a successful, inclusive republic devoted to inalienable rights was on the political leaders' minds. In George Washington's famous reply to the Hebrew congregation of Newport, he acknowledged their expressions of gratitude for "the Blessings of civil and religious liberty which we enjoy under an equal and benign administration." But he pointedly added a word about duties:

> It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

We should when discussing illegal immigration, at least acknowledge the possibility that conservatives who can't readily get over it may be motivated by principle, not bigotry. It's not self-evident that people who live here by virtue of breaking the country's immigration laws can demean themselves as good citizens by complying with all the other laws. A faintly theological question concerns whether, how, and when the original sin of entering and remaining in the country illegally can be atoned for by the good works of living lawfully and productively thereafter. Republicans might appeal to some additional voters by treating illegal immigration as the moral equivalent of jaywalking, but they would also offend other voters who consider the violation of those laws a more serious matter. It's not enough to figure out which group is larger; it's also necessary to ask which one is right.

Robert Bork and Original Intent

Bradley C.S. Watson is right to praise Robert Bork and to pair him with Joseph Story as two of the greatest proponents of the fixed rule of law that lies at the very core of written constitutionalism ("The Old Race of Judges," Fall 2009). But Watson fails to see how inconsistent his own dissents from Bork are, both with the rule of law and with the founders' conceptions of the proper limits of judicial power.

Watson laments Bork's alleged "legal positivism," quoting his seminal 1971 law review essay: "There is no principled way to decide that one man's gratifications are more deserving of respect than another's or that one form of gratification is more worthy than another." Watson, however, takes Bork's words out of context. What Bork was clearly expressing is the rather conservative notion that no neutral or exact principle can be impartially or apolitically applied to resolve all complex matters. He explicitly states that, when he was younger, he had mistakenly thought that there is a judicially enforceable "general principle of individual autonomy" emanating from the Bill of Rights, a view that continues to ensnare many libertarians. Rejecting that earlier belief, Bork says (in the sentence immediately following the one that Watson quotes) that he now realizes such matters inevitably involve the application of subjective analysis and moral judgment—applications that the founders rightly entrusted to elected legislators rather than to unelected judges.

The founders defined the judges' role as saying what the law is, not what it should be. Thus, in answer to Watson's subsequent parade-of-horribles question about what should be done if a legislature were to outlaw marriage, the founders—or Abraham Lincoln—would have likely replied with something along the lines of, "Change the law; do not resort to lawlessness."

Watson writes, "The Constitution assumes—and the founders explicitly elaborated—the idea of a morally ordered universe." True enough, but they also explicitly elaborated the idea of a separation of powers. Watson writes that to refuse to recognize natural rights and to apply them from the bench "is not really to be a proper originalist; at most, it is to be a stunted originalist, incapable of bringing careful moral reasoning to bear on cases where the Constitution is ambiguous or silent." The refusal to recognize natural rights is indeed problematic. But so is the notion of having the judiciary apply them in an extra-textual way. The founders did not view the Constitution's ambiguities or silences as invitations for judges to speak.

Bork and Story are models of the jurisprudence that the founders envisioned and extolled—a jurisprudence dedicated to applying the law as written, not reshaping it as desired. Departures from this ideal in the direction that Watson counsels are unfortunate, for they amount to little more than Brennanism on the Right.

Jeffrey H. Anderson
Orcutt, CA

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Bradley Watson's review of Robert Bork's collection of his writings presents Judge Bork as, at one and the same time, a defender of a constitutional jurisprudence of original intent, and a determined enemy of the principles of the Declaration of Independence understood as principles of the Constitution. But a jurisprudence of original intent is possible only on the basis of the principles of the Declaration. Bork's only contribution to a jurisprudence of original intent has been to give it a bad name.

Watson writes that

> Judge Bork deserves credit for reinvigorating in legal circles an idea that had once been taken for granted: constitutional interpretation must have recourse to one or another form of originalism in order to be legitimate. If it does not, we live under the rule of men rather than law.

But the issue of originalism versus the Progressives' "living Constitution" has always turned on the question of whether, because of the guarantees to slavery, the intent of the original Constitution was not morally and constitutionally defective. On this question Watson himself appears to be unclear. He denounces the "contemporary liberals who insist on embracing Taney's reasoning [in *Dred Scott*] that the Constitution as originally drafted did, in principle, protect slavery." Whether or not it did so "in principle" the Constitution did in fact offer massive protections to slavery.

Article I, section 2, provided that three fifths of slaves be counted in the allocation of representatives in the House and in the Electoral College, and in the apportioning of direct taxes. In 1860 there were 4 million slaves, adding 2.4 million to the free numbers of the slave states. Not an inconsiderable addition in a nation of about 30 million. Article I, section 9, prohibited Congress from blocking the importation of slaves from Africa before the year 1808 and Article V denied any constitutional power to amend this provision. Of course, this limitation ended in 1808, yet the very idea of limiting the power of amendment implies a limitation upon the sovereignty of the people. How can a Constitution which rests entirely and solely upon the sovereignty of the people deny to itself any right to amend? That such an anomaly was in the interests of slavery cannot be ignored.

Finally, we have Article IV's fugitive slave clause, which provided that runaway slaves "shall be delivered" to their owners. The imperative word "shall" left open the question of by whom this return must be effected, whether by state or federal agency. But it left no doubt that it was a constitutional mandate. Abraham Lincoln was unambiguous and unequivocal that an oath to support the Constitution meant an oath to enforce this article no less than any other. Hence Lincoln no less than "contemporary liberals" agreed with Chief Justice Taney that the original Constitution protected slavery.

Nevertheless, the original Constitution deserves to be considered an antislavery document. The concessions to slavery deserve to be regarded as dispensations of prudence. Without these concessions the Constitution could not have been ratified, and slavery would have been left in a far stronger position. However, the Constitution's proslavery provisions did not determine the status of slavery in the territories, the question upon which North and South differed so profoundly that only Civil War could settle it. Only a government as strong as the one created by the Constitution of 1787 could have resisted successfully the thrust for domination by the slave power in the antebellum period. Only a government committed to the principles of the Declaration of Independence could have possessed that strength.

The text of the Constitution makes no moral or legal distinction between its proslavery provisions and those favorable to human freedom. All the words of the Constitution are equally binding. According

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to Southern doctrine, upheld by Taney in *Dred Scott*, when a citizen of a slave state went into a federal territory with his slave property, that property was entitled to the same protection as any property of any other citizen coming from a free state. The Constitution, it was held, forbade any discrimination against the lawful property of citizens of slave states.

The free-soil argument, on the contrary, pointed to the Fifth Amendment, which forbade depriving any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law. Slavery, the free-soil argument went, might exist under the positive law of the slave states. But the jurisdiction of slave law did not extend beyond the boundaries of the slave states. When a black man set foot in a federal territory he was, as a human person, entitled to his liberty by the Fifth Amendment. But, replied the slave states, the owner of a slave was himself a human person, who might not, according to the same Fifth Amendment, be deprived of his property when he entered a federal territory.

The entire antebellum debate resolved itself into the question of whether a Negro slave was to be regarded primarily as a human person or as a chattel. Under Southern slave state law he was both. But a human person is endowed with reason and freedom of will, and a chattel has neither. By nature a human person cannot be a chattel, and by nature a chattel cannot be a human person. Which takes precedence? By the law of the slave states, black slaves were considered both as human persons and as chattels. In most cases and for most purposes they were not considered human, but were considered to be as properly under the will of a master as any dog or horse or ox. When they were considered human it was only to make them responsible for injuries to others. In the case of an injury caused by chattels—by a dog or a horse, for example—it was the owner who was held responsible. The slave was not considered chattle for a moment, so to speak, in order to make him and not his owner responsible for damages. A wonderful concession to the slave's humanity! Hence the slave states insisted that in a territory, except when he committed a crime, the slave remained a chattel.

The Republican Party platforms of 1856 and 1860 recited in full the statement of principles in the Declaration of Independence, and asserted that these principles were embodied in the Constitution. On this basis, it followed that the Fifth Amendment could only be interpreted in favor of the slave's humanity. By the law of the slave states he may have become a chattel, but by nature he was in truth a human person. By reason of the presence within the Constitution of the principles of the Declaration—the principles of the laws of nature and of nature's God—the government of the United States, within its proper jurisdiction, could recognize only the slave's humanity.

Watson wishes us to recognize Judge Bork's contributions, however flawed, to a jurisprudence of original intent. But a jurisprudence of original intent is important only as the Constitution requires a moral compass. The Constitution's moral compass is to be found in the principles of the Declaration. Without this compass, the idea of original intent is meaningless. Watson quotes from a 1971 law review article of Bork's that "There is no principled way to decide that one man's gratifications are more deserving than another's or that one form of gratification is more worthy than another." But this is sheer nihilism. It provides no basis for distinguishing the gratifications of a Nazi or a Communist constitution from one that is Lincolnian or Jeffersonian. It is death to the cause of conservative constitutionalism.

Harry V. Jaffa
Claremont, CA

Bradley C.S. Watson replies:

Jeffery Anderson claims I have gone too far in my criticism of Robert Bork, while Harry V. Jaffa claims I have not gone far enough.

Mr. Anderson accuses me of making arguments inconsistent with the rule of law and the founders' conceptions of judicial power—as well as taking Judge Bork out of context. On the latter point, there is no context that can save Bork's comments from Jaffa's characterization of them as sheer nihilism. Allow me to quote the sentences immediately following the one I quoted in my review: "Why is sexual gratification nobler than economic gratification? There is no way of deciding these matters other than by reference to some system of moral or ethical values that has no objective or intrinsic validity of its own." I don't believe for a moment that Bork is a nihilist, but he does come close to saying that, in his judicial capacity, he must behave as if he were one.

In these fluid times, what Mr. Anderson refers to as my "parade-of-horribles"—a progressive legislature doing away with marriage (beginning, perhaps, by merely "privatizing" it)—seems far from unimaginable. As a point of prudence, I think that only the most egregious and clear-cut cases should warrant judicial second guessing of legislative judgments when the Constitution's words are not dispositive. Though the founders would not have imagined such intervention necessary, neither would they have imagined the radical reconfiguration of their constitutional order by the winds of progressive change.

The first rule of legal construction, according to Story himself, is to interpret the instrument according to the sense of the terms and the intentions of the parties. My hope is that we can raise up judges who are self-restrained, but not blind: besides reading words on a page, or reading the minds of the founders, they must follow the *logic* of the Constitution. Conservatives have been losing the culture war in the Supreme Court for decades largely because constitutional "originalists" fail to put forth substantively originalist alternatives to majority conclusions. Instead, they prefer deference—either to legislatures or to the meanderings of their philosophically-challenged colleagues.

As I wrote in my review, to be a legal positivist is to be a stunted originalist. Bork's positivism serves him well, in most cases, but it stops short of the founders' constitutionalism. In his first State of the Union address, President Obama very publicly attempted—but failed miserably—to call out members of the Supreme Court on a recent decision. Notwithstanding the president's ineptitude, it would behoove constitutional originalists on the Court and off to call out the justices, too, when they are wrong and show them why they are wrong, in a manner that relies on something more than "the legislature made us do it."

Although I have the greatest respect for Harry V. Jaffa, I don't know what I can add to my argument that will please him. I agree with him that Judge Bork fails to see that an originalist jurisprudence is only possible on the basis of the principles of the Declaration—on an understanding of the nature of things and man's pre-political rights and obligations embedded in that nature.

I don't think, however, that I'm at all unclear on the original Constitution being an anti-slavery document. The clauses in it that recognized the existence of slavery in positive law were indeed, as Prof. Jaffa states, dispensations of prudence. It is unclear to me, however, what Jaffa means by saying "the issue of originalism versus the Progressives' 'living Constitution' has always turned on the question of whether, because of the guarantees of slavery, the intent of the original Constitution was not morally and constitutionally defective." Born of social Darwinism and pragmatism, Progressivism was from the outset hostile to any and all notions of fixed constitutionalism, whether or not that constitutionalism was "defective" from a moral or natural-rights position. Progressives were explicitly contemptuous of the founders' Constitution—and

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of nature as a standard of political right—for reasons that had nothing to do with slavery.

I don't think I'm out of place either for recognizing Judge Bork's contributions to constitutional originalism. Even on the basis of his stunted originalism, he would have been able to come to correct conclusions in most cases in which Justice Kennedy has erred appallingly.

Unions and Civility

In a letter responding to William Voegeli's "Look out for the Union Label" (Summer 2009), I differed with his contention that unions serve mainly to undermine the economy, maintaining that though imperfect they play an integral role in our industrial relations system (Correspondence, Fall 2009). I did so in a respectful way that focused solely on the issues, because I don't believe I have a monopoly on wisdom, and because I think that civility and a willingness to listen are the best way to advance our understanding.

Replying to my letter, Voegeli decided to personalize things, belittling me as a reporter, making light of my reasoning abilities, identifying other writers he prefers, accusing me of not covering labor but covering for labor, and on and on. I could have done the same, asserting that he covers for corporations, but I'd rather address the issues than level personal insults. I have no idea why he chose a snide, demeaning, and hostile tone. I'd like to think my arguments were too powerful to be dismantled on the merits, but perhaps it's simply that he believes his views can't be challenged, thinks one best discusses policy matters through attack, or couldn't muster the intellectual firepower to stick to the topic.

On the issues themselves, I'm not going to re-engage. He's made his points; I've made mine. He thinks he's right; I think I'm right. Probably, because these things are complex and multifaceted, I'm right on some issues, he's right on others, and the way to move forward is to extract the best from both points of view.

Philip Dine
Chevy Chase, MD

William Voegeli replies:

Philip Dine is right to take offense, and I was wrong to give it. I apologize to him for personalizing a political argument, and to *CRB*'s readers for scuttling what might have been a useful exchange of views. Dine and I disagree fundamentally about the benefits and drawbacks of the labor movement. There's a good chance we would have ultimately concluded our exchange exactly where he leaves it, by agreeing to disagree.

It would have been better, though, if we could have found a way to disagree productively by making clear how far each of us were, and were not, prepared to take our arguments. A better second draft of my reply would have stipulated that Dine's decisions to trivialize the physical intimidation of a journalist (Dine) by union members, and euphemize credible evidence of money laundering by union leaders, raised no questions about his competence or integrity, but only about the soundness of his political opinions. If these were examples of acceptable union conduct, what, if anything, would be an example of unacceptable conduct?

I'll note for the record that I would not follow the logic of my own argument all the way to the conclusion that labor unions are invariably and necessarily bad. There appear to be examples of union behavior that is significantly more productive and collegial than the conduct of the United Auto Workers I discussed in my article. Southwest Airlines, for instance, is heavily unionized; various news articles state that more than 80% of its employees belong to one union or another. Either because of or notwithstanding this fact, Southwest is widely admired as an enterprise that regularly executes a difficult triple-play: its employees, and its customers, *and* its shareholders all have good reasons to be happy with the company. If management would study what makes Southwest tick, it might go a long way to reviving the national economy. If unions could explore the same question, they might find the best path for reviving the labor movement.

Correcting a Misimpression

It is normally authors who write in to complain about reviews, but in this case I, the reviewer, would like to correct what appears to me a misimpression I might have left with readers of my recent review of Colleen Sheehan's *James Madison and the Spirit of Republican Self-Government* ("Madison's Avenues," Fall 2009). In one place I spoke of "the lengths Sheehan goes to deny that separation of powers... are central to Madison's thought." As I now read that over it sounds like I am judging her argument as stretched and mistaken, but that is not what I meant to convey. I was attempting to compare the role of separation of powers in her book and in George Thomas's *The Madisonian Constitition*, and would have stated my meaning better by writing that "she argued strenuously" against the centrality of separation of powers. I did not mean to judge the quality of her argument here but merely to mark the contrast between the two books.

Michael P. Zuckert
Notre Dame, IN

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CLAREMONT REVIEW OF BOOKS
VOLUME X, NUMBER 1, WINTER 2009/10

GAME, SET—BUT NOT MATCH?

Book Review by John O'Sullivan

The Age of Reagan: The Conservative Counterrevolution, 1980–1989,
by Steven F. Hayward. Crown Forum, 768 pages, $35

ON THE PENULTIMATE PAGE OF *THE AGE of Reagan: The Fall of the Old Liberal Order, 1964–1980,* the first volume of his magisterial political history, Steven Hayward drew this momentous but tentative conclusion:

> In smashing the monopoly of liberalism in 1980, Reagan exposed the fractured and increasingly hollow character of what passes for liberalism in the late twentieth century, and prepared the ground of political debate on which American politics is still being conducted today. That is what makes the closing decades of the twentieth century the "Age of Reagan." Like the post-New Deal era—the "Age of Roosevelt"—the Age of Reagan may prove equally durable.

This possibility looks more likely, though still uncertain, 21 years after Reagan left office than at almost any time during his presidency. One of the many merits of Hayward's second volume, covering Reagan's years in the White House, is that it reminds the reader firmly just how embattled and frustrated he seemed for much of the period. Simply to list some of the main episodes of those years—the attempted assassination and its aftermath, the resignation of Office of Management and Budget director David Stockman, two mid-term electoral reverses, the retreat from Lebanon under fire, the nuclear freeze movement, the 1987 stock market crash, the Iran-Contra hearings, the Savings and Loan crisis, the "Borking" of Robert Bork—is to depict a presidency mired in difficulties and apparently heading for oblivion. All of these setbacks were magnified by an almost comically biased media. And though Reagan enjoyed successes from Grenada to Reykjavik, they seemed brief and atypical interludes in a general story of amiable confusion. About the most flattering impression at the time was of Reagan as Laocoön waging a magnificent but doomed struggle to free himself and America from the coils of Liberaldom at home and abroad.

We have to remind ourselves—or have Hayward remind us—of this contemporary impression because recent Reagan scholarship has presented a far more favorable view of the man and his presidency. Books by liberal historians such as John Patrick Diggins and Richard Reeves have conceded that Reagan was a formidable statesman with great historical achievements to his credit. Reagan himself contributed to this revisionism when his columns, broadcasts, and diaries, published over the past ten years, revealed him not as an "amiable dunce" but as a well-informed, serious man with a strong grasp of major political issues. Events in the real world—which sometimes conquer even the defense mechanisms of intellectuals—came to his aid as well. His economic policies were followed by America's economic recovery, the modernization of U.S. capitalism, and a boom that lasted 26 years with only two brief and modest interruptions. His foreign policy led to the first U.S.-Soviet arms reduction agreement, victory in the Cold War, and the peaceful collapse of Communism.

If anything, Reagan's new admirers compensate for their heresy on the central issues of Reaganomics and the Cold War by repeating the standard liberal critiques of his policies on homelessness, budget "cuts," the environment, AIDS, labor unions, affirmative action, and almost everything else. Indeed, these critiques often have a curious taken-for-granted quality as if it is unnecessary to argue such things since everyone knows them to be true.

BY CONTRAST, HAYWARD, WHO IS THE F.K. Weyerhaeuser Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and a senior fellow at the Pacific Research Institute, sets out to look in detail at almost all the important controversies of the Reagan era (the S&L crisis is a rare exception). In doing so, he examines critically not only what Reagan said and what his administration did but also how the Democrats responded and what the media reported. He discovers, unsurprisingly, that sometimes the Reagan Administration was either seriously mistaken (the Iran-Contra affair) or blunderingly inept (the Bob Jones University tax flap). More often than not, however, he finds that the administration was correct or at least reasonable, the media partisan, and the Democrats alarmist.

The fabled "cuts" in Reagan's landmark 1981–82 budget are a good example of all three. What the administration initially proposed (be-

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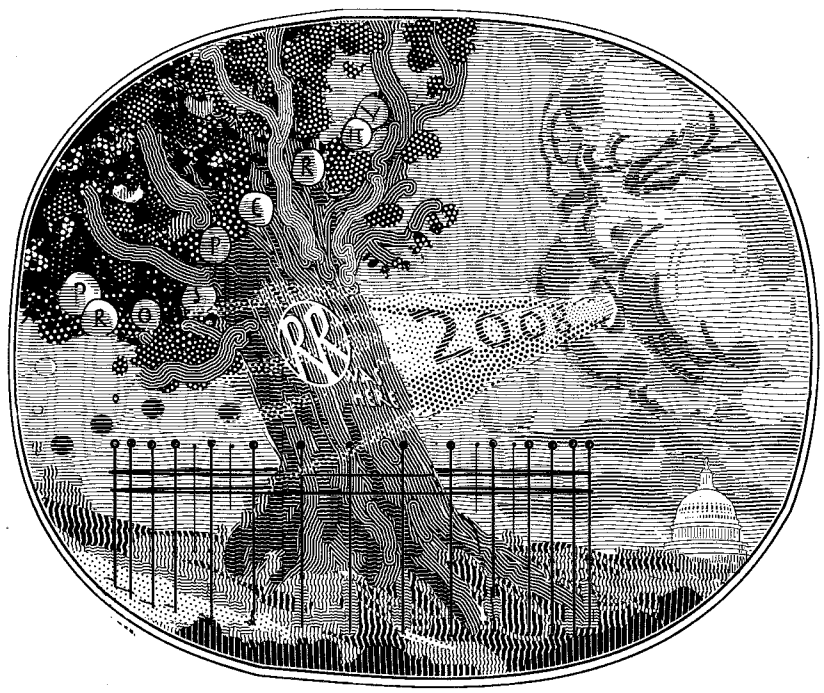
fore congressional haggling added various pork-barrel items) involved no actual reductions in welfare spending at all. Almost all the supposed "cuts" were reductions in a previously planned rate of growth (i.e., budget hikes). As Hayward points out, "overall spending for all social programs in 1982 was still $53 billion *higher* than in 1980." But this modest fiscal restraint was depicted by the media as the imposition of a brutal austerity.

"Hunger in America is back," intoned Bill Moyers in a CBS special before Reagan's "cuts" had even taken effect. Charles Kuralt similarly reported that food stamp cuts were "putting people into a 1981 version of the bread line." (When they eventually came, the 4% "cuts"—$100 million out of $11.4 billion—tightened eligibility, but 22 million recipients remained on food stamps.) "The impact of the Reagan cuts on minority groups is likely to be severe," ran a front-page *Washington Post* news report. Several urban Democrats predicted a long hot summer of riots as a result of the "cuts." (The riots never occurred.) Tip O'Neill, Speaker of the House and their de facto leader, said in a spontaneous television interview that the president "has no concern, no regard, no care for the little man in America." Later, in a speech, he accused Reagan of being "a tightwad, a real Ebenezer Scrooge."

In the course of his narrative Hayward subjects one after another of these anti-Reagan critiques to a well-researched, critical examination. Almost always they turn out to be either grossly exaggerated or outright untruths. (Perhaps it would be kinder to describe them as metropolitan myths or superstitions of the sophisticated.) This painstaking process sometimes slows down Hayward's otherwise well-paced and highly readable account. But that is a price worth paying for a comprehensive analysis that will serve as a treasure trove for future historians.

It also helps answer another question. How did Reagan's popularity withstand this avalanche of difficulties and bad publicity? His critics have argued over the years that the president's amiability and communication skills persuaded the voters to overlook or forgive the "cruelty," "harshness," or "callousness" of his policies. But if his policies were none of those things, as Hayward establishes very clearly, maybe the explanation is that the voters realized that Reagan was closer to reality than his critics in the media and the opposition. This sympathy for the president on matters voters grasped, such as food stamps, would then bolster his credibility on more arcane questions, such as monetarism and missile defense.



When Hayward moves onto the larger picture of the Cold War, he tackles material on which established opinion is already favorable to Reagan—far more so than when the author began his gargantuan two-volume task. Yet he tells a gripping story vividly—especially the Geneva and Reykjavik summits—with balanced judgments and new material. And as in other recent accounts, Reagan emerges as a statesman significantly different from the portrait of him both admirers and critics have carried in their minds. The simplest description is to say that he saw all the great issues of politics, including peace and war, through a serious (Christian) moral perspective.

Although SDI turned out to have all sorts of political advantages for America, the overriding appeal of missile defense for the president was the argument that it was more moral to defend the American people than to avenge them with a nuclear strike. This commitment, which was close to nuclear pacifism, won over Pope John Paul II when they met in 1982 in Rome. Meanwhile, the U.S. Catholic bishops defended the "stability" of Mutual Assured Destruction over and against this explicitly moral calculation, even though they had long been uneasy (at best) about MAD.

Reagan's nuclear views reflected a subtle, prudent view of military power in general. He was more than happy to employ a *show* of force as a strategic tactic. He did so on entering office when he signed off on the proposal of U.S. Navy Secretary John Lehman for a massive Anglo-American naval exercise in the North Atlantic to challenge Soviet domination in that region. On the other hand, he was very reluctant actually to use force—according to his secretary of state, George Shultz, he did so on only three occasions in eight years. When American medical students were threatened by a Marxist coup on the island of Grenada, he doubled the number of troops requested by the Joint Chiefs (whom he infuriated by falling asleep during their briefing) because he thought more lives would be saved on all sides if the U.S. had an overwhelming predominance. He pointed out, too, that if Jimmy Carter had doubled the number of troops and helicopters in his attempt to rescue American hostages in Iran, he might still have been giving the orders in 1983.

In short there was no discontinuity between the Reagan who denounced the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" and helped the Contras in Central America, and the Reagan who worked with Mikhail Gorbachev to sign arms reduction agreements. In each case the president was pursuing a tough-minded moral strategy to resist and defeat Communism without risking a nuclear war. And as it turned out, that's exactly what happened.

Even so, Hayward ends his study on an elegiac, questioning note. Did Ronald Reagan create a Reagan era? Or did he merely slow the drift of America towards a somnolent statist future? These questions redirect our attention to American domestic politics. For, as the opening quote makes clear, a Reagan era would be one in which Reagan, like Roosevelt before him, set the terms of American political debate for the foreseeable future. But Reagan is accused, somewhat less by Hayward than by some disillusioned conservative reviewers, of failing in that task in various ways. How valid are such charges?

Reagan certainly failed to turn the culture back to the simpler, more patriotic world of the 1930s that he idealized and even embodied. Gay rights, abortion rights, and other moral novelties continued their remorseless advance through the culture. But he had other things to do—winning the Cold War, reviving the American economy—that seemed more important at the time. Besides, the wholesale transformation of a culture is not something that a president is expected—at least by conservatives—to attempt. It is remarkable enough that he should have restored the standing of the presidency and the belief that America is governable.

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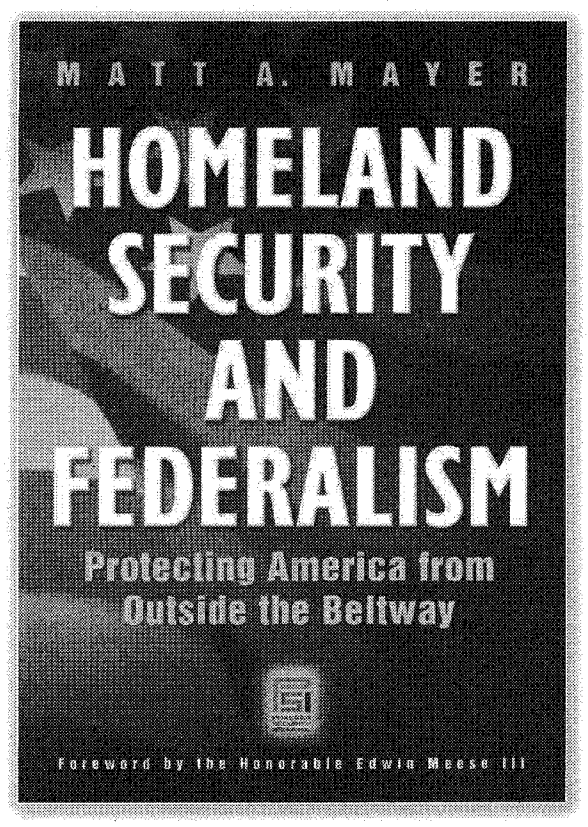

Homeland Security and Federalism

Protecting America from Outside the Beltway

Matt A. Mayer, Foreword by the Honorable Edwin Meese III

In this most timely and important book, Matt A. Mayer uses the principle of federalism to present a compelling case that the best way to protect America from terrorists is to get the power out of Washington and into the hands of governors, mayors, and the men and women on the front lines in our communities. *Homeland Security and Federalism: Protecting America from Outside the Beltway* takes the reader from America's Colonial period to the inner workings of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. It shows what worked historically—and why the approach taken after September 11 failed to heed the lessons of history.

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Matt A. Mayer is president and CEO of Provisum Strategies LLC, Dublin, OH, as well as visiting fellow with The Heritage Foundation and adjunct professor at The Ohio State University.

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"Mayer outlines what's at stake in the homeland security debate with wonderful precision and insight. This book is an important and timely read for policymakers and citizens who care about the future of security in this country." —**Leonard Leo, Executive Vice President, The Federalist Society**

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Reagan equally failed to reverse welfare-state liberalism. Hayward posits that this is because persuading voters to give up benefits they already enjoy is beyond the power of political man—or at least harder than defeating Communism. Maybe so. But Reagan halted the advance of such liberalism. When he left office, he bequeathed to his successors a set of penalties and incentives that for two decades or so made any further flirtation with that liberalism costly and controversial.

Reagan did fail, however—and fail significantly—where Margaret Thatcher succeeded. He failed to convert the opposition party. For a while he seemed to have done so; President Bill Clinton balanced the budget, declared that the era of big government was over, embraced NATO and NAFTA expansion, backed a Republican plan for welfare reform, and sought safety in triangulation. But a series of factors—the Iraq war, George W. Bush's domestic drift leftwards, the political possibilities of the internet, boredom with centrism—pushed the Democrats back towards their statist and wobbly foreign-policy attitudes of 20 years ago. And Barack Obama was elected president on policies that reflected these attitudes.

Obama has praised Reagan, as Hayward notes sympathetically, for changing the "trajectory" of American politics. But the current administration's policies are a thorough reversal of that trajectory on the economy, taxes, the budget, health care, climate change, and much else. Hence we cannot be sure if the "Age of Reagan" will prove a durable era or merely a conservative interlude between the "ages" of Roosevelt and Obama.

What is clear is that if the Reagan era is to be durable, then President Obama must not succeed—either politically because he cannot pass his programs, or substantively because his programs pass but then produce some blend of higher inflation and lower growth, and are subsequently abandoned. Reaganomics succeeded politically in 1981, but its more lasting success was the long boom in the years after Reagan left office. What matters ultimately is not the popularity of a policy but the popularity (and soundness) of its results.

Steven Hayward deserves our gratitude for establishing this vital but unfashionable truth over the full range of policy and the eight years of the Reagan presidency, even if a final judgment on the durability of the Reagan era remains tantalizingly open.

John O'Sullivan is executive editor of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague and editor-at-large of National Review. *He is the author of* The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister: Three Who Changed the World *(Regnery).*

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Essay by Steven F. Hayward

Reading Up on the Right

With the stunning victory of Scott Brown in Massachusetts it appears the long night of the soul for conservatives may be over. The last two years have been tough for the Right. In terms of political power, conservatism is at its lowest point in more than 30 years. A radical president and a willing Congress have expanded the size and reach of centralized government in ways that Lyndon Johnson and Bill Clinton never dreamed of. Although Barack Obama may be stymied on health care, cap and trade, and other large ambitions, conservatives should not suppose the tide has turned decisively in their direction. Conservatives appear confused or less than fully confident about their understanding of the economic crisis. The Tea Party movement, though reflecting a healthy populist backlash against Obama's program of governmental gigantism, lacks the programmatic focus of the tax revolt of the late 1970s, which quickly joined itself to supply-side economics. Polls reveal a public increasingly uneasy with Democratic policies, but the public also continues to hold the Republican Party in low regard.

This low pass is leading to a lot of stock-taking. Conservative intellectuals, in particular, are in eclipse at the moment. The leading public figures on the Right today tend to be the media celebrities of talk radio and cable TV, who make up in decibels what they lack in rigor and depth. We've traded Bill Buckley for Glenn Beck, Irving Kristol for Ann Coulter. The intellectual generating the most enthusiasm on the Right these days is Ayn Rand, the once-marginalized figure whose books have been selling like Shamwows since Obama took office. Neoconservatives remain in the doghouse—and not only among liberals (the Cato Institute's Ed Crane wants them thrown "under the bus"). The Religious Right is said to be a spent force.

The fraying and infighting on the Right partly revolve around whether America is still a "center-right" nation, as was confidently asserted when Ronald Reagan thumped liberals in the 1980s and Bill Clinton was compelled to move right to preserve his presidency in the 1990s. While independent voters are swinging sharply against Obama, opinion polls only show a slight uptick in the proportion of Americans who describe themselves as conservative. Reaction to Obama's overreaching should not be confused with a sea change in bedrock political sentiment. The fractiousness of the Right, rooted in conflicting intellectual principles in its different camps, is nothing new, and has always been a source of conservatism's dynamism in ways few liberals perceive. The Left, in the suggestive simile of Joe Sobran, is like a hive, uniformly swarming in support of more collectivism as if by insect instinct. The analogous simile for the Right might be a soccer or basketball team, where the players move independently of the ball in seemingly chaotic fashion.

But even if the diversity and fractiousness of the Right is a sign of health, there are still fundamental tensions that the Right has been unable to resolve. Conservatives have been observing and commenting on their intramural intellectual divisions for more than 50 years now, searching for a stable synthesis along the lines of Frank Meyer's famous "fusionism." Rather than making progress in defining a synthesis, the Right seems to be inventing still more subdivisions for itself, nowadays including "crunchy-cons" (conservatives with green lifestyles) and, if John Derbyshire has his way, what might be called "grumpy-cons," to join the ranks of neocons, paleocons, and libertarians. The good news is that conservatism is no longer the orphan of historical scholarship that Alan Brinkley described over a decade ago. To the contrary, there are perhaps more books about the Right than the Left over the past few years (partly because with only a few exceptions the Left is largely uninterested in its intellectual patrimony). But there are still some crucial blind spots in this burgeoning literature, along with some plainly wrongheaded analyses.

Conserving a Revolution

Patrick Allitt's *The Conservatives: Ideas & Personalities Throughout American History* has the great virtue of treating conservatism as an *American* phenomenon rather than as a transplant or mere derivation of European thought. It would be an excellent book to assign in any survey course on American political thought. And instead of beginning the story, as so many recent histories do, in the post-World War II decades, Allitt starts with the American Founding, though a case could be made for giving a small nod to the early colonial and Puritan settlers. Like most other observers, Allitt finds it difficult to offer a unified defini-

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tion of conservatism. "[W]hy is it internally divided?" Allitt asks at the outset. Chiefly because conservatism is more "an *attitude* to social and political change" and hence "there is no consistency in conservatives' beliefs about what should be conserved."

Allitt is on the right track, though, in insisting that understanding the founding is central to any reckoning with American conservatism: "American conservatism has always had a paradoxical element, entailing the defense of a revolutionary achievement." The American Revolution has been a stumbling block for some conservatives, who deny its revolutionary character and try to portray it as continuous with British or European political thought. (Hence Russell Kirk's dislike of the Declaration of Independence, for example.) James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, both rightly considered 18th-century liberals, emerge in Allitt's account as "conservative innovators"—only in America would such a phrase not be considered an oxymoron—and *The Federalist*, according to Allitt, should be considered "the new nation's first conservative classic," even though it laid out, if not a *new*, at least an improved science of politics. Here we come across the first major difficulty. Allitt says that "conservatives have generally taken an antitheoretical approach to their world," but the politics of the founding relied heavily on theoretical insights.

Despite this, Allitt's generally unbiased and objective treatment of conservative thinkers and ideas through the decades is one of the best ever produced, even though it is still uneven in spots. He gets Lincoln largely right, while noting the Southern conservatives who vehemently hate Lincoln, but he gets Theodore Roosevelt mostly wrong. T.R.'s large and admirable personality should not distract us from his anti-conservative and often demagogic Progressivism that manifested itself in a cavalier attitude toward the Constitution, which helped prepare the transformation of the presidency and the birth of the modern administrative state.

Like most recent surveys of the Right, Allitt's narrative really gets hopping in the postwar years, with the emergence of free-market intellectuals such as Friedrich Hayek, Ludwig Von Mises, and Milton Friedman, and the sensational arrival of William F. Buckley, Jr., and *National Review*. At this point, Allitt recognizes, the Right graduated from being an attitude to being a self-conscious movement. Allitt also makes a nod to a few important conservative activists and activist organizations such as Phyllis Schlafly and the Young Americans for Freedom, and notes the centrality of the *Roe v. Wade* (1973) decision to the shape of modern American politics.

As good as Allitt's account is, Gregory L. Schneider offers a more thorough one in his new survey, *The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution*, precisely because it is limited to the 20th century. Like Allitt, Schneider confronts at the outset the problem of defining conservatism: "The focus on factionalism demonstrates that American conservatism possesses a protean character and that self-definition has been an elusive, and fascinating, conservative quest for a century." Noting successive attempts to cobble together a definition, he throws up his hands: "It might be time to move beyond such efforts."

Books discussed in this essay:

The Conservatives: Ideas and Personalities Throughout American History, by Patrick Allitt. Yale University Press, 336 pages, $35

The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution, by Gregory L. Schneider. Rowman & Littlefield, 280 pages, $39.95 (cloth), $19.95 (paper)

Reappraising the Right: The Past and Future of American Conservatism, by George H. Nash. ISI Books, 450 pages, $27.95

The Death of Conservatism, by Sam Tanenhaus. Random House, 144 pages, $17

We Are Doomed: Reclaiming Conservative Pessimism, by John Derbyshire. Crown Forum, 272 pages, $26

While Schneider's copious account of the post-war conservative movement is superb, his brief summary of conservatism in the decades before World War II, like Allitt's, leaves some important questions unexamined. They both offer good surveys of the few American conservative thinkers of the Progressive and New Deal eras such as Albert Jay Nock, Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More, Ralph Adams Cram, and the Southern Agrarians, but do not explore why there was not a more robust conservative critique of the constitutional deformations of Progressive ideology. Schneider notes that except for a few spasms in the 1930s, "The Old Right lacked the institutions necessary to confront the New Deal political revolution." But of course the problem goes back further than FDR. Schneider writes elsewhere, "The Old Rightists never were effective in addressing the central tendencies of liberalism and remained, as historian George H. Nash described them, 'scattered voices of protest, profoundly pessimistic about the future of the country.'" Not until after World War II, admits Schneider, did conservatives understand that they needed to "plunge into politics," define their principles, spread their ideas, and seek electoral majorities via a necessarily more populist appeal: "The answer was not the conservatism of Cram, Irving Babbitt, or the Southern Agrarians."

Conservatives and Progressives

WHICH BRINGS US TO GEORGE H. NASH, the author of one of the first major treatments of conservatism, his 1976 classic *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*. (It is tempting to paraphrase Albert North Whitehead's comment about Plato and philosophy, and suggest that most histories of modern conservatism are footnotes to Nash.) Nash updates his previous work with a new essay collection, *Reappraising the Right: The Past and Future of American Conservatism*. He is also the biographer of an important pre-war figure—Herbert Hoover—and Hoover casts into particularly sharp focus the anemia of pre-war conservatism.

In his new collection Nash notes Hoover's "idiosyncratic blend of progressivism and antistatism," which pleased no one. Hoover "showed the influence of pre-1914 Progressivism" that made him both a "modernizer" and a "technocrat." Hoover's dilemma points directly to the twin problems of pre-war conservatism: the inability to reckon fully with the real social and economic problems of industrialization, along with the slowness to perceive and react to the Progressives' wholesale overturning of the Constitution—amounting to refounding the country—that occurred during these decades. Hoover appears to have staked out a position midway between Hamilton's and Jefferson's famous disagreement about whether large-scale national commerce or individual, small-scale agrarianism was the best form of political economy for the preservation of the republic. As Nash writes,

> we must not lose sight of the fact that for all of Hoover's reforming and modernizing impulses, he also had a conserving purpose: the preservation, in an urban, industrial society, of the American tradition of equal opportunity.... The purpose of Hoover's limited governmental regulation was to strengthen and preserve

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American Individualism, not to subvert or supplant it.

Here we see Hoover embracing the decent or rightful purposes of Progressivism—we might say Hoover was the original "compassionate conservative"—while lacking Calvin Coolidge's insight into the deforming premises of Progressive political thought. (Nash's collection, by the way, includes a terrific essay on the complicated relationship between Coolidge and Hoover when the latter was Coolidge's secretary of commerce, though Nash doesn't contrast their constitutional views—chiefly because Hoover didn't seem to have any.) Conservative thinkers—mostly in the libertarian camp—have only begun in recent decades to confront the genuine problems (child labor, workplace safety, labor markets, concentrated market power, and so forth) the Progressives sought to tame.

One reason for this lacuna in conservatism is that the so-called Social Darwinists of the late 19th century, usually counted as conservatives, lustily attacked the natural right ideas of the founders and essentially paved the way for the formal rejection of the founding by Woodrow Wilson and other Progressives. This problem is still not widely recognized today in the chronicles of conservative thought. Conservatism has also been ambivalent about the Hamilton-Jefferson argument. Allitt recognizes both Hamilton and Jefferson as conservatives, though acknowledging that the case for each is not ironclad. But here we note that one strain of Progressivism—the Herbert Croly variety—was thought to be a synthesis of the Hamilton-Jefferson argument: endorsing Hamiltonian means to Jeffersonian ends.

Even if Croly's prose were clear, the idea would still be muddled. Yet it raises one of the central questions in any attempt to define conservatism: is conservatism merely a branch of the liberal tradition, or is it a fundamental alternative to liberalism? Allitt fumbles this question at the end of his treatment. Having argued that conservatism is more an "attitude" than a coherent doctrine, he briefly dismisses Louis Hartz's thesis in *The Liberal Tradition in America* (1955) that Lockean liberalism is the sole political philosophy defining the American experience. "Individuals whose ideas I have here described as conservatives [Hartz] treated merely as the inhabitants of one end of the liberal spectrum," Allitt writes. Hartz's book "was an artifact of its time," Allit concludes. "Fifty years later... it would be perverse to voice an argument like Hartz's." Well, one post-Hartz figure who embraced his view was Ronald Reagan, who Nash points out liked to argue, "Today's conservative is, of course, the true liberal—in the classical meaning of the word."

Leftward Ho?

YET NASH ALSO NOTES THAT BY BECOMING a self-conscious political movement with its own national establishment, conservatism would seem to have absorbed Croly's framework of using national, Hamiltonian means for individualist, Jeffersonian ends. In other words, contemporary conservatism in practice is not far removed from Hooverism, despite Reagan's robust voice and actions. "[I]n practice if not quite in theory," Nash laments, "American conservatism today stands well to the left of where it stood in 1980."

The leftward drift of American conservatism will come as a surprise to Sam Tanenhaus, who argues in *The Death of Conservatism* that what ails the Right today is precisely its drift to reactionary "revanchism." He charges that the conservative movement has not accommodated itself *enough* to the leftward end of the liberal continuum of which it is a part. Instead, the "revanchist" Right today is "committed to a counter-revolution, whether the restoration of America's pre-New Deal *ancien régime*, the return to Cold War-style Manichaeanism, or the revival of pre-modern 'family values.'" Today's conservatives, Tanenhaus says, "seem the heirs of the French rather than of the American Revolution," and are the true Jacobins of American politics, rigidly attached to "orthodoxy." (Tanenhaus finished his book before the tea parties broke out; there's no telling how many more odious comparisons these would have summoned forth.)

Tanenhaus earned for himself a large portion of respect from conservatives for his masterly biography of Whittaker Chambers nearly 15 years ago, and although he writes with grace and attempts to treat conservative ideas seriously, with *The Death of Conservatism* he has squandered his goodwill with the Right. Despite his professed sympathy for conservatism, his depiction of it in this book will be unrecognizable or seem badly distorted to most right-wingers. *The Death of Conservatism* offers yet more evidence that the *New York Times* (Tanenhaus edits the Sunday *Times Book Review* and "Week in Review" sections) exists in some kind of twisted parallel universe.

A properly oriented or "realist" conservatism, Tanenhaus thinks, exists to make liberalism better. A plausible argument, perhaps, but Tanenhaus's model of realist conservatism is mostly the *National Review* of the 1950s and '60s—especially the outlook of Whittaker Chambers, James Burnham, Willmoore Kendall, and Kendall's protégé, Garry Wills—along with certain practical men of the Right, particularly Eisenhower and Nixon. There is a delicious and almost comical irony in Tanenhaus's em-

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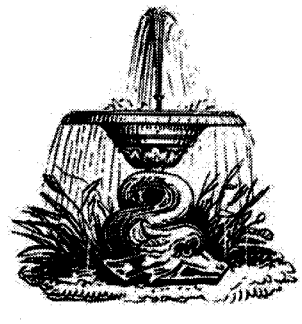

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brace of the old *National Review*. On the surface his argument would seem to be a repudiation of Dwight Macdonald's dismissal of *National Review* at the time of its founding: "We have long needed a good conservative magazine.... This is not it.... It is neither good nor conservative." Macdonald's complaint against *National Review* was, on closer inspection, nearly identical to Tanenhaus's complaint against conservatism today, namely, that *National Review* was merely "anti-liberal" rather than conservative, that is, not properly deferential to liberalism. Buckley's response reveled in exactly what Macdonald (and Tanenhaus) scorned: "[*National Review*] does not consult Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. to determine the limits of tolerable conservative behavior." Yet that is more or less exactly what Tanenhaus thinks conservatism needs to do today. Tanenhaus's argument turns out to be a restatement of G.K. Chesterton's quip that the business of Progressives is to go on making mistakes, while the business of conservatives is to prevent the mistakes from being corrected. No thanks.

History and Its Discontents

But there is a more serious core to Tanenhaus's embrace of Chambers, Burnham, and "realistic" conservatism that explains the defects of his analysis and reveals a serious problem for conservatism. Consider the astounding conclusion of this passage:

> Once again the American right must 'face historical reality,' as Whittaker Chambers advised half a century ago.... It is also why David Souter, who in his nineteen years on the Supreme Court infuriated so many on the right by his refusal to advance the movement's pet judicial causes—instead immersing himself in the study of history, partly to uncover in the past 'some relevance to a constitutional rule where earlier judges saw none'—may well endure as the most authentic conservative in the Court's modern history.

Resist the urge to snort coffee out your nose at the endorsement of Souter as the age's "most authentic conservative," or write off Tanenhaus for a lame attempt at deadpan humor. We see here in his evocation of "history" that modern liberals—or Progressives as they more accurately refer to themselves lately—presume, without any longer having to adduce a reason, that history is moving purposely in a direction in conformity with their ever-expansive social vision. Within this bubble of presumption it is natural to suppose that only a hidebound reactionary wedded to an unthinking orthodoxy could believe otherwise. In other words, if thinking conservatives would only look more seriously at the flow of history, as Souter did, they'd realize they are on the wrong side of it and get with the program.

While the stiff and formal Hegelian theories of History or Progress have faded into the mists, the sentimental residue lingers on. The progressive-historical attitude has become so embedded in the liberal mind that its pedigree is no longer recalled; thus liberalism presumes the illegitimacy of conservatism without having to argue the matter. This defect of the liberal mind finds its parallel in the conservative mind, however, which Tanenhaus unknowingly reveals in his approving citation of Whittaker Chambers's counsel that conservatives need, however distasteful it may be, to accommodate history. Tanenhaus writes: "To Chambers, an avid student of history, well schooled in Marxist argument, it was obvious that the growing dependency on government was a function of the unstoppable rise of industrial capitalism and the new technology it had brought forth.... And the Right had better adjust."

A return to the American Founders, rather than to Edmund Burke, ought to provide us with a means of seriously and explicitly contesting liberalism over the meaning of progress.

Chambers was of course a pessimist, noted for thinking he was joining the losing side of history. (One wonders what Chambers would have made of Ronald Reagan, let alone the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union.) His pessimism was rooted partly in what he saw as the asymmetry of each side's moral strength: the Communists and the radical Left were determined and ruthless; the West was decadent and weak. But his pessimism was really informed by the fact that although he traded his Communism for Christianity, he never really shed his Marxist historicism. Ditto for James Burnham, also cited in Tanenhaus's narrative. This lingering fatalism represents a self-inflicted debilitation for conservatism.

Neither Chambers nor the conservative movement as shaped by Buckley ever explicitly challenged the Left's idea of progress, or the terms in which the Left understood human advancement. This may have had something to do with why Buckley ultimately abandoned his "big think" book about a conservative vision of the world; it will be interesting to see what Tanenhaus has to say about that in his eventual WFB biography. But remember the *National Review* rallying cry: to stand athwart history yelling "Stop," rather than grabbing hold of history and sending it in a different direction.

Chesterton reminded us, "All conservatism is based upon the idea that if you leave things alone you leave them as they are. But you do not. If you leave a thing alone you leave it to a torrent of change." But Chesterton also noted, "We are fond of talking about 'progress'; that is a dodge to avoid discussing what is good." Tanenhaus is right that pre-war conservatives did a poor job of understanding and responding to the changes that were taking place as a result of industrialization and urbanization; but is a return to Burkean conservatism the answer, as Tanenhaus suggests? The trouble with a generic "Burkean" approach to understanding change and progress is that it is a weak reed against the Left, as can be seen by Woodrow Wilson's easy fusion of Burke and Hegel in the service of reinterpreting the Constitution. (If any more evidence were needed, consider David Brooks's report that Barack Obama is an admirer of Burke; one looks forward to a future Obama memoir in which he will provide a Burkean veneer to Saul Alinsky's little platoons of union goons.)

Tanenhaus, who professes to admire Willmoore Kendall, would have done well to think through Kendall's critique of Russell Kirk's Burkeanism. In Kendall's unfinished *Sages of Conservatism*, he writes: "Let us ask, rather: Is the [Burkean] teaching *sound*, that is, a teaching that contemporary American conservatism would be well-advised to let the Benevolent Sage of Mecosta talk it into accepting? And let us give at once the only possible answer, which is No." Kendall scorned "Kirk's writing and thinking with an eye too much to Burke and not enough to the Framers, so that he addresses himself to, for Americans, the wrong topics in an inappropriate vocabulary." A return to the founders, rather than Burke, ought to provide us with a means of seriously and explicitly contesting liberalism over the meaning of progress.

The Audacity of Hopelessness

On the other hand, we could just resign ourselves to the thought that liberalism is inevitable, unstoppable. Such is the advice of John Derbyshire's *We Are*

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Doomed: Recovering Conservative Pessimism. Derb, as his friends and fans on *National Review Online* know him, might seem to be the Dr. House of the conservative movement—acerbic, abrasive, sarcastic, but usually right; but a better comparison is to Albert Jay Nock. Seldom has doom and gloom been expressed with so much style and laugh-out-loud prose. In fact, Derb appears in places to offer a more plain-spoken version of Nock's famous essay on the "remnant": "We pessimists, you see, are not only wiser than the smiley-face crowd; we are *better people*" (original emphasis). For all of his acerbic grumpiness, one can imagine Derb going down on the Titanic with a relentless stream of mordant wit about the whole thing. *We Are Doomed* is simply a great read, and will have an oddly cheering effect on some readers.

Conservatives of all types will find much to agree with, and much to be troubled by, in Derb's tour of the horizon. Most will be in emphatic agreement with his critique of the diversity mongers and money-grubbing educrats. "Education," he writes, "is a vast sea of lies, waste, corruption, crackpot theorizing, and careerist logrolling," for which there is little or no chance of serious reform. More problematic is his chapter on culture and human nature, where he dilates on recent findings on genetic and biological determinism that undermine a central tenet of conservatism, that culture shapes human character. He may well be right or partly right about this, and he is certainly right that "culturism" (as he calls it) is the premise for leftist social engineering. He recognizes that the implications of his speculations in this area would require "a new conservatism."

Derb also thinks the U.S. is fated to follow the example of Europe by becoming even more secular: "America's religious exceptionalism is doomed, and American conservatism with it." He is against "the damn fool Iraq war" (though he initially supported it as a punitive raid, akin to gunboat diplomacy), along with the "conservative utopianism" that thinks we can implant democracy in the Arab world. It is the foreign policy cousin, he argues, of "compassionate conservatism" at home. He refreshingly omits the usual animadversions against the dreaded neocons, but wishes the George W. Bush who spoke against "nation-building" in the 2000 campaign had stuck to this position.

In advocating that conservatives embrace "the audacity of hopelessness," Derbyshire does not offer political prescriptions or strategies for the conservative movement. To the contrary, he says near the end, "I fully expect to pass the rest of my life as an American without ever seeing any major conservative legislation passed by Congress, or any major executive action drawn from conservative principles, or any Supreme Court ruling that will do more than slow the advance of state power by a percentage point or two." In his last chapter he attempts to conform to convention by offering some hope, though this might be subtle parody on his part (note the juxtaposition of Samuel Beckett's stage play *Happy Days* with the television sitcom *Happy Days*). His "hope" is pretty forlorn and antipolitical: through pessimism "we can still transmit something of value to the future, while seeking for private contentment in the present while the earth-pile rises."

Here one arrives at the odd, unintended convergence between Tanenhaus and Derbyshire. Tanenhaus thinks the conservative movement would be better off if it ceased to think of itself as the self-conscious political movement it has been since the 1950s. Implicitly Derbyshire's privatization of conservatism would have us do the same thing. While the prospects for conservative "revanchism" may still seem daunting in the Age of Obama, it is nonetheless surprising that Derbyshire never raises the obvious question: without the conservative movement of the past 50 years, how much worse would things be? The revival of conservatism, drawing upon the richness of American exceptionalism, probably explains most of the political variance between the United States and Europe in the postwar era—explains, in particular, why America has refused to make peace with the modern welfare state, why we remain a military superpower, and why Americans remain a religious people. With Obama faltering and a resurgence of conservative energy evident, even Derb might want to don his armor, draw his sword, and enter the fray once more.

Steven F. Hayward is F.K. Weyerhaeuser Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, senior fellow at the Pacific Research Institute, and author of The Age of Reagan: The Conservative Counterrevolution, 1980–1989 *(Crown Forum).* *This essay is part of the Taube American Values Series, made possible by the Taube Family Foundation.*

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Book Review by Regina E. Herzlinger

The Antidote to Obamacare

The Top Ten Myths of American Health Care: A Citizen's Guide, by Sally C. Pipes.
Pacific Research Institute, 182 pages, $19.95 (paper)

I like Sally Pipes. She is fun—inevitably cheerful, beautifully groomed, and exceedingly witty. These qualities are apparent in her stylish, upbeat, witty book.

But more than that I like her consumer-driven ideas about health care reform; the tart, clear way she expresses them; and the economy with which she marshals an impressive array of facts to support them.

This little bantamweight of a book—smaller than a laptop with only 148 pages of text—effectively dismantles many of the alleged facts used to support the Democratic health care overhaul that was expected to pass easily in 2009. The reforms relied on the thought that Uncle Sam was good for your health—he would organize markets for health insurance, determine the prices health insurers could charge and how they could spend their money, and design the contents of the health insurance policies they could offer. To ensure perfect competition, Uncle Sam would compete with these neutered health insurers through a public plan. All of this would control costs, by virtue of the government's excellent management, and provide universal coverage.

Well, even the folks in my vastly liberal home state of Massachusetts did not buy this set of ideas, as their 2010 election of a Republican senator who opposed the plan clearly demonstrated. Scott Brown must have read Pipes's book because he echoed all her sentiments in his smart campaign.

As she notes, the U.S. health care system is pretty good, especially for the sick. For example, we have the world's best cancer survival rates due, in part, to our willingness to pay for the expensive drugs that palliate and sometimes cure it. If universal coverage denies needed care for the sick, as she demonstrates is the case in Canada and Great Britain, then it is a Faustian bargain. Universal coverage for the healthy? Surely you jest.

Pipes effectively skewers other myths: the purported efficiency of government-run insurance programs which are not only much more expensive to administer than is alleged but also

fail to enroll the very people for whom they are designed, and treat them poorly to boot; the alleged incompetence of our pharmaceutical sector, which, as she demonstrates, has created a disproportionate share of the drugs that prolong life and save money along the way; and the magic bullet of government-run health information technology programs that, to date, are more like a bullet to the head of health care providers forced to comply with extensive, murky regulations.

The president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, the free-market think tank based in San Francisco, Pipes is a bipartisan critic. Her sharpest digs are aimed at the Democrats who longed for single-payer health care. The Republican Mitt Romney comes in for his share of digs for launching the current ill-considered health reform movement when he was governor of Massachusetts. Universal coverage in Massachusetts has turned out to be a fiscal train wreck even for this wealthy state. She also mocks the nannyish Republican (wait, what month is this? Is he a Democrat, Independent, or Republican today?) mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, who banned trans-fats from area restaurants.

But her most extensive indictment is reserved for the government-dominated single-payer systems around the world that our Democrats are so keen to emulate. Despite her support for market-based solutions—e.g., opening up an interstate purchase of health insurance, changing the federal tax laws to allow individuals to purchase health insurance with pre-tax dollars, and so forth—she has not swallowed the Kool-Aid that so many Republicans have drunk and that has so distanced them from the populace. Unlike them, she acknowledges that tens of millions of Americans need health insurance and offers some good ways of getting them insured, based on creating a consumer-driven market.

But here is where Sally Pipes and I part company. Absent community rates (charging everyone the same regardless of age or health status), I do not see how sick consumers will be able to afford the purchase of health insurance (as she notes, they account for about 80% of health care costs). And absent government-mandated universal coverage, community rates will be absurdly high because only the sick will enroll. Although she does not discuss this problem, the typical Republican solution of government-funded high risk pools for the sick means their care will be overseen by the very government whose competence she has so effectively skewered.

Other than that, Pipes is darn near perfect.

If you want to read one book that cuts through the lobotomizing health care reform debate and points to a clear path for solving the problems, this is the one.

Regina E. Herzlinger is the Nancy R. McPherson Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School.

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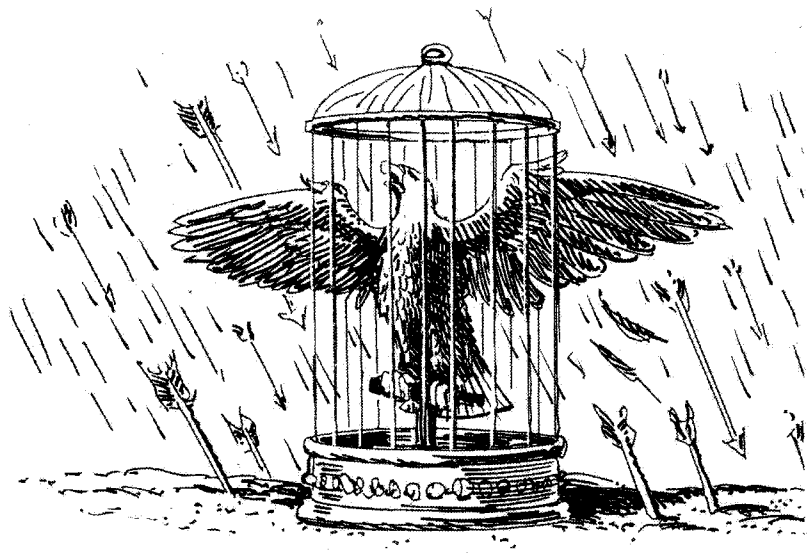
Essay by Angelo Codevilla

Why We Don't Win



More than eight years after a gang of Arabs murdered 3,000 Americans, no one argues that the U.S. government has managed to avenge our fellow citizens, much less ensure our peace, safety, and "Enduring Freedom." Nearly a decade after September 11, lower Manhattan's Ground Zero remains a hole—in Bret Stephens's words, "a site of mourning turned into a symbol of defiance turned into a metaphor of American incompetence." Only a third of Americans now tell pollsters that we are winning against the terrorists. Two-thirds of respondents are angry with their government; about half of these are "very angry," having lost faith in its capacity to perform even basic functions. Rasmussen reports that although a third of those polled think the country's best days are ahead, a majority believes that America's future will be worse than its past.

For decades, under Democrats and Republicans, liberal internationalists, neoconservatives, and realists, the U.S. government let the terrorist wave build. Then after 9/11 it spent over 5,000 American lives in Afghanistan and Iraq without achieving anything that it had promised, while conducting a self-discrediting diplomacy toward Iran, Russia, North Korea, and China. At home, the Homeland Security department diminished our liberty without increasing our security. In this respect, the differences among Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, Jimmy Carter, and Richard Nixon, and among Secretaries of State Hillary Clinton, Condoleezza Rice, Madeleine Albright, Warren Christopher, George Shultz, and Henry Kissinger, are less important than their similarities: the "small war" of terrorist acts that has beset us since the 1960s—infinitesimal as wars go—was enough to expose our bipartisan ruling class's incomprehension and incompetence. America's problem is that this class has set the country on a downward slope in foreign as well as domestic matters, and that it is increasingly difficult to imagine America on any other trajectory with it at the helm.

Whatever It Takes?

On September 11, 2001, fifteen Saudi Wahabis, plus two from the Emirates and one from Lebanon, led by an Egyptian Muslim Brother, brutally deprived America of peace. They executed a plan devised by the (secular) terrorist network of Khalid Sheik Muhammed—the very people who had first attacked the World Trade Center in 1993, carrying passports from Iraq. But though peace is the natural aim of statecraft, American statesmen never considered how to restore our peace.

Defeat and victory are obvious and undeniable. Winners celebrate a better future; losers mourn a better past. Winners live confidently in peace; losers scurry after ever receding mirages of it. The news of 9/11, the images of burning Americans jumping to their deaths and of iconic buildings in flames, set off victory dances in the Arab street. Crocodile tears from what our political class likes to call "the international community" thinly veiled its satisfaction that, as Barack Obama's mentor Jeremiah Wright would put it, "America's chickens came home to roost." To the many who celebrated the end of the American era, the future looked brighter than the past. Not so to the American people. Combining outrage with mourning, they demanded (as a rescue worker at Ground Zero shouted to President Bush) "whatever it takes" to destroy terrorists and all who had anything to do with them. But America's bipartisan ruling class never intended to turn the mourners into revelers, and vice versa.

Our best and brightest refused to take seriously the possibility of holding Middle Eastern governments responsible for the incitement of these attacks, for both the money and the terrorists that flow from their jurisdictions. Nor did they identify any other source of the problem. Hence, regardless of how the operations they ordered might fare, our experts were not going to solve America's problem. Instead, they promoted the notion that 9/11 would "change everything, forever"—*in America*. They accepted terrorism as a fact of modern life and told Americans to get used to finding public spaces turned into fortresses, to showing documents and being frisked. The slogan "united we stand" did not tell Americans to eliminate our enemies, but to stand still, to commemorate our dead, to believe and obey Washington. There would be no victory, much less peace. Demands for either would be deemed extremism. The terror threat would remain "orange" indefinitely, and the bloodletting would have no end. It's a wonder that Americans' spirits held up as long as they did.

September 11 brought to America the Muslim world's endemic warfare. As a routine matter, Sunni Arab secular regimes violently repress the Muslim Brotherhood while deflecting their zealous anger toward Westerners. Somewhat similarly, Saudi Arabia's regime turns the mur-

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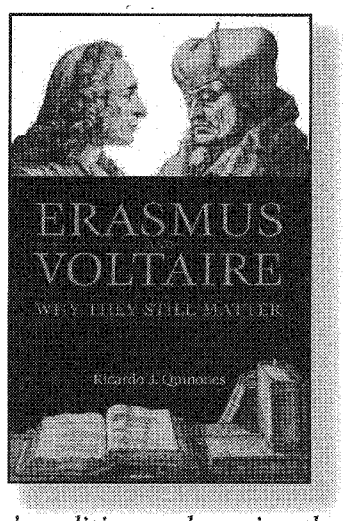

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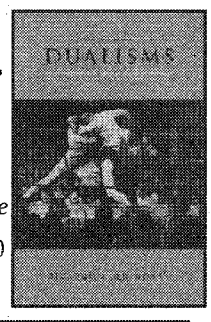

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derous Wahabi sect with which it is intertwined against impure Muslims and Westerners. All repress the Shia in their midst. Iran's Shia regime fights its Sunni neighbors for elbow room by supporting Shia elements in Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine, and affirms its Muslim credentials by fighting Westerners. Terrorism is the Muslim world's tool of choice for international as well as domestic affairs.

The diplomacy of Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt toward the West combines demands—and vague suggestions that satisfying those demands might lead to some lessening of terrorist activity against us—with dark hints of violence if the demands are not met. By contrast, America and Europe now live in fear of attacks on behalf of causes espoused by these states. Western policy is based on the notion that peace for us depends on satisfying them. Hence every president since Richard Nixon has promoted one version or another of "the peace plan," seeking to trade our side's concrete concessions for Arab promises to stop trying to destroy Israel, Western civilization's outpost in the Middle East; to curtail Arab governments' anti-Western incitement; and to stop facilitating terrorists. Every secretary of state from Henry Kissinger to Hillary Clinton has pressed Israel to "take chances for peace."

America's own concessions have resulted in a Muslim world ever less inclined to give us peace. In the 1970s the U.S. government agreed to the Arab world's demands to treat Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organization as the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative, and even started financing it secretly. Similarly, in the 1980s the U.S. helped Syria take over Lebanon, and in 1991 ensured the survival of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. The Bush Administration's reaction to 9/11 was gratuitously to declare Arab governments allies in the war against terrorism. Barack Obama confessed America's sins (not his own) to the Muslim world and proposed mutual understanding. Today, it is inconceivable that any of the Muslim world's governments, which routinely police public expression in their countries with iron fists, would recommend to its subjects even elementary courtesy to Jews, Christians, or mere Westerners.

Profiles of Defeat

By contrast the U.S. government has officially declared that Islam—all parts of it—is a "religion of peace," and that Muslim countries are pillars of the international community. To discourage the American people's natural reaction to their attackers as well as to search for ways of reaching out to Muslims at home and abroad, the U.S. employs Muslims to craft codes of speech and behavior for its employees and for members of the armed forces, codes that the mainstream media effectively spread through civil society. In 2006, under Hasham Islam, a protégé of then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England, the Pentagon franchised the American Muslim Council (whose leader was later convicted of plotting a murder) to supply Muslim chaplains for the U.S. armed forces.

When a Muslim murders shouting "Allahu Akhbar," as did U.S. Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan as he shot 51 colleagues at Fort Hood, Texas, the official reaction grimly recalls Groucho Marx's joke about how a man answered his wife when she caught him *in flagrante*: "Who you gonna believe, me or your own eyes?" After the shootings, President Obama warned against "jumping to conclusions," and Army Chief of Staff George Casey added that "it would be a *greater* tragedy if diversity became a casualty here" (emphasis added). Never mind that Hasan identified himself on his business card as "SoA" (a soldier of Allah), that he attended a Wahabi mosque, and that he had lectured colleagues, on the Koran's authority, that infidels should have burning oil poured down their throats and be beheaded. The *New York Times* editorialized that many soldiers returning from deployments exhibit high levels of violence, that Americans had taunted Hasan for being Muslim, and in its letters column that America itself manufactures many Hasans. Chicago's mayor Richard Daley blamed the American public's love of guns. The presidential commission's report on the matter, prepared by former Army Secretary Togo West, blamed "extremist behavior" (of which Americans and Christians are at least as guilty as anyone) and never mentioned Muslims, Arabs, or any reason for avoiding the obvious.

Why do our leaders avoid the obvious? Because, as *Newsweek*'s Evan Thomas pointed out, talking about Muslims committing terrorist acts tends to "get the right wing going," which the ruling class fears more than they fear foreign terrorism. Noting that terrorism comes chiefly from the Muslim world is in bad taste among our rulers because it amounts to "profiling." Yet they profile all the time. The FBI fruitlessly focused its investigation of the 9/11 anthrax attacks tightly on two persons it hounded to death and on another to whom it was forced to pay $5.8 million in damages—because these three fit its profile of the "mad scientist." Attributing anti-American terrorism to the American people's own defects is an even more common profile, part of that polite narrative which Thomas Friedman describes as

> the cocktail of half-truths, propaganda and outright lies about America that have taken hold in the Arab-Muslim world since 9/11. Propagated by jihadist Web sites, mosque preachers, Arab intellectuals, sat-

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ellite news stations and books—and tacitly endorsed by some Arab regimes—this narrative posits that America has declared war on Islam, as part of a grand "American-Crusader-Zionist conspiracy" to keep Muslims down.

Adopting the narrative of those who would kill you is the surest sign of defeat.

Consistent with this narrative, the FBI also launched operation "Vigilant Eagle" in February 2009, which profiles for surveillance as possible terrorists American "militia/sovereign-citizen extremist groups" and veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. On April 7, a Department of Homeland Security memo made this official U.S. policy. No evidence told our ruling class that these Americans were dangerous. But the profile did. By contrast, though the government had intercepted Major Nidal Hasan's e-mail exchanges with an al-Qaeda cleric in Yemen (who later wrote: "the only way a Muslim could Islamically justify serving as a soldier in the U.S. Army is if his intention is to follow in the footsteps of men like Nidal"), he fit a profile that allowed him to become part of an advisory group to President Obama's 2009 transition task force on security. In short, our governing class's profiles reflect prejudices at odds with reality.

The Logic of Insecurity

The logic of our ruling class's burgeoning security apparatus is that any person is neither more nor less likely to be a terrorist than any other, and that focusing on Muslims (especially of a certain age, etc.) is some kind of crime. That logic mandates bothersome but impotent surveillance of the general population. Whenever terrorist incidents spotlight that impotence, this logic prescribes ever-greater doses of the same. On Christmas Day 2009, a young Nigerian whose prominent father had warned the U.S. embassy of his son's Muslim anti-Americanism almost blew up an airliner over Detroit with a bag of high-explosive powder attached to his underwear—having been let on board without even showing his passport. Republicans and Democrats rushed to enhance security by forcing all air travelers through scanners that would show us naked (with faces obscured) to security officers. (Inevitably, these officers' cubicles will be tagged "Peeping Toms' Cabins.") What can be said of a ruling class that pursues security through universal nakedness?

To what next step will our rulers' security paradigm take us? It is no secret that nakedness is insufficient because drug couriers routinely take onto airliners far more stuff hidden in body cavities than the Christmas bomber had in his underwear, and because objects hidden in body cavities can be discovered only by body cavity searches. That is why male and female inmates processed into maximum-security prisons undergo body cavity searches either manually or by ultrasound. Were a jihadist to use a cavity bomb to bring down an airliner, might the notion of treating us all like high-security convicts be ludicrous enough for our rulers to rethink their cultural-political paradigm? What would it take for our experts to admit that security starts with focusing on political and social differences, rather than with the pretense that these are irrelevant?

Ingrained Ineptitude

Our ruling class's persistent denial of the fact that war arbitrates human differences, and its belief that "victory" is a dangerous relic from a less enlightened age, explain why terrorists have confounded it so easily. Consider the record. During the Korean War our best and brightest chose not even to cut the enemy army's supply line from China, and prevented the Chinese Nationalists on Taiwan from opening a second front. On such sophistication they established an academic orthodoxy. Bernard Brodie's canonic book *The Absolute Weapon* (1946) assumed that because the next war would wipe out mankind, all nations now shared a primordial interest in peace. In the 1950s Robert Osgood (*Limited War: The Challenge To American Strategy*, 1957), Henry Kissinger (*Nuclear Weapons And Foreign Policy*, 1957), and Thomas Schelling (*The Strategy of Conflict*, 1960) expanded the orthodoxy, arguing that all peoples want essentially the same things and that all governments maximize their interests by acting within matrices of rational choices.

In that fertile decade, too, our bipartisan ruling class came to see itself as the patron of the world's truly progressive, revolutionary forces, persuading itself that they would be America's pupils and friends. Thus the CIA financed Gamal Abdul Nasser's Free Officers' movement that took over Egypt in 1953, as well as parts of the National Liberation Front that took Algeria from France between 1954 and 1962. Saddam Hussein got his start as a lowly CIA agent in 1959. When Fidel Castro took over Cuba in the same year, he joked: "I got my job through the *New York Times*," the slogan of the want-ad section of the American establishment's newspaper.

Always surprised whenever the "Third World" they helped create turned against them, our experts grew to accept William Appleman Williams's explanation in *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959): the American people are racist, greedy, and arrogant, and have been on the wrong side of oppressed peoples' struggles for justice and progress. The Vietnam War

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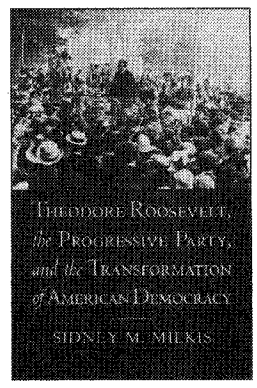

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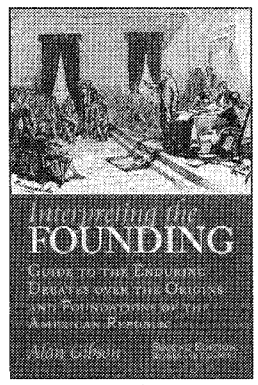

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showed what happens when a country's ruling class believes that foreign enemies are less the problem than its own citizens. Robert McNamara, secretary of defense under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson during most of the Vietnam War, later admitted in *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (1995) that he had always regarded the American majority's pressures for victory as more dangerous than the North Vietnamese. Henry Kissinger acknowledged in *Diplomacy* (1994) that only a minority of Americans ever favored *reducing* military pressure on the enemy. But, like McNamara, he was part of that ruling bipartisan minority.

When fantasies and proclivities clash with foreign realities, our experts have sought "exit strategies" and accepted what they formerly had deemed unacceptable. In the 1960s they outgrew their commitments to Vietnam. In 1979 they repudiated their commitment to Iran's shah, then bet on ingratiating themselves with the Ayatollah Khomeini's regime, then loudly deemed his Islamic Republic unacceptable, and finally tried to accommodate it in ever more embarrassing ways. When the U.S. government sent Marines in token objection to Syria's takeover of Lebanon in 1983, Secretary of State George Shultz boasted: "the Marines can take care of themselves." But when Syria's agents killed 241 of them with a truck bomb, the U.S. government preferred leading America in mourning to loosing its furies. Hollow boasting followed by impressive mourning is now a U.S. specialty.

Our government's reaction to American leftists' hijacking passenger aircraft to Cuba in the 1960s exhibited the priorities and assumptions that have dictated its reaction to terrorist acts ever since: Do not hold any foreign government responsible for facilitating the acts, or failing to stop them. Take no account of the perpetrators' or sympathizers' political identity. Remember that the American majority's overreaction poses a greater danger to peace and good governance than any terrorist act. And if forced to use the armed forces against foreigners, avoid focusing them on regimes, and instead use them as cops and as shields behind which you can try turning your enemies into friends. But wrap it all in patriotic rhetoric.

Evading the Question: Afghanistan

After September 11 the U.S. government tied itself in knots over the question "who's responsible?" But the answer was as self-evident as it had been for just about every terrorist act since the 1960s—namely, the host of governments that espouse violent anti-American causes and that facilitate the individuals who actually do the killing. Our rulers shunned this reality in order to avoid coming to grips with the practical question: "what do we have to do to make those governments crush the very causes they encourage and the people who serve them?" Hence, they fixed on a far less meaningful inquiry: "who had been the hijackers' direct supporters?" Based on evidence never made public, George W. Bush adopted unquestioningly the CIA's answer that Osama bin Laden had masterminded 9/11, and he accepted, too, the Agency's consequent equation of America's terrorist problem with al-Qaeda. Subsequently, the government, followed by the media, defined the "war on terror" as a campaign to destroy al-Qaeda. In practical terms, that meant doing something in Afghanistan, where al-Qaeda was living.

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But nothing that Americans might do in Afghanistan could have removed our terrorist problem. Crushing the Taliban for having hosted bin Laden—our enemy, to be sure, regardless of whatever role he had in 9/11—might have been useful as an example of what America would do to any and every regime that abetted our enemies. But even the death of every "Afghan Arab" would hardly have dented a problem that predated 1998—when bin Laden and company came to the U.S. government's notice by bombing U.S. embassies in Africa—and that involved far greater numbers of people, institutions, and anti-American trends. At best, the U.S. military operations in Afghanistan that began in October 2001 might have been incidental to later operations aimed at the problem's heart. No such operations were ever conceived.

Military success in Afghanistan came after the White House decided to support the war that the Northern Alliance of Tajik and Uzbek tribes had been waging against the Pashtun Taliban's regime. With U.S. air support, the Alliance routed the Taliban coalition's tribes, most of which switched sides and sold the "Afghan Arabs" in their midst to the Americans, who shipped these "terrorist detainees" off to Guantanamo Bay. But this success proved how insignificant the Taliban and al-Qaeda were. Though the U.S. captured most of the people who had ever associated with bin Laden—perhaps a fifth of whom had committed crimes or were highly motivated at the time of capture—others who had never heard of al-Qaeda before 9/11 started committing anti-Western acts in its name around the world. No one has reported seeing Osama bin Laden alive since October 2001, though several people have reported attending his funeral. Nevertheless, the U.S. government continued to speak and act as if he and al-Qaeda were the fount of anti-American terrorism. Although capturing him would not have eliminated our terrorist problem, not finding him, and accepting as genuine the tapes issued in his name, actually exacerbated the problem.

Our ruling class was impervious to the fact that artificial national boundaries divide all of Afghanistan's five major ethnic groups from their kin in neighboring states, and that each tribe always welcomes money and guns, but seldom foreigners. Misreading their 2001 success as a victory of moderates over extremists, the Americans set about trying to moderate the whole country. The resulting flow of billions of American dollars through some tribal networks to the disadvantage of others, American lecturing on lifestyles (including birth control), and the killing or maiming of innocents in dragnets for Taliban remnants, roused Afghans to insurrection. The non-Pashtun resented the central government because the Pashtuns dominated it. But many Pashtun resented the government because it represented the forces that had defeated a Pashtun regime, and because the national army now contained 80,000 Tajiks. So when money from wealthy Wahabis in the Gulf began paying the Pashtun tribes on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border to do what they increasingly felt like doing, and funneled suicide bombers to them, the insurrection grew. Americans might have left Afghanistan in 2001 having strengthened the Tajiks and Uzbeks, shielded the Hazara from pressure from the Pashtun, and made clear to the latter that harboring Afghan Arabs hostile to America is a bad idea. Instead, by 2006 Afghanistan was a problem bigger than ever and Americans were stuck occupying an increasingly hostile country.

Everything but War: Iraq

In 2002, the State Department and CIA were particularly protective of Saddam Hussein's Iraq—State because keeping Iraq under Sunni rule pleased the Arab world, and CIA because it believed that Saddam's Baathist ruling party contained "moderate" kindred

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souls. Hence both strove to prevent the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. Afterward they pressed for occupying the country to further their own particular visions of it. Meanwhile the Pentagon just wanted to overthrow Saddam. Because straddling these conflicts took priority over critical thinking about ends and means, the U.S. government's official justifications for the 2003 invasion of Iraq gave no strategic guidance; and its decision to occupy and reform the country turned an initial military success into a parody of war deadlier than war itself.

The United States might have decided to invade Iraq because it sponsored terrorism. Saddam's defiance of America had made him, arguably, the Arab world's most prominent person. He used that prominence to whip up hatred against us, and televised his encouragement of all manner of terrorism against both America and Israel. The people who attacked the World Trade Center in 1993 had come from Iraq. There was plenty of evidence of contacts between his intelligence service and al-Qaeda. Had the U.S. government invaded to make the country inhospitable to terrorism, any military planner could have designed operations to inflict on its governing class the kind of terrible end that would discourage its successors and other regimes from risking the same fate. In fact, this is what the Pentagon wanted to do: turn Iraq over to the people who had been fighting its regime, and who would finish it off. Then America's Iraq operation would have ended. But CIA argued that Iraq's past or present support for terrorism was not a legitimate reason for using force against it, because CIA could not (nor did it want to) prove Iraq's "direction and control" of 9/11.

Was the invasion meant to rid Iraq of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)? The State Department and CIA argued that the only legal justification for military action against Iraq was its defiance of United Nations resolutions requiring it to rid itself of WMDs, and that the only danger Iraq posed to America was that it might pass these weapons on to terrorists at a future time. President Bush invoked WMDs as the principal reason for the invasion. But had the invasion really been a weapons hunt, any military planner could have worked up an operation to scour the country, with high assurance of doing so successfully and then to end. But it was never going to be a mere weapons hunt. What precisely, then, should U.S. forces do in Iraq beyond overthrowing its government? And what would it take to accomplish that ultimate end? Neither the president nor any of those who advocated reforming Iraq had a clear notion.

Precisely because neither the president nor the relevant bureaucracies had settled on coherent ends and means, the invasion was named "Iraqi Freedom." That Saddam's regime was beastly to its own people was obvious, as was the fact that his overthrow would free them from him. But what "Iraqi Freedom" might mean was hotly disputed in Washington and would be argued with blood in Iraq. The concept's inherent imprecision and the disputes arising from it made it impossible for military planners to devise operations with a logical end, in the sense both of a purpose and a termination point. What was the problem that overthrowing Saddam's regime was supposed to fix? The answer should have determined what was to be done there. But the problem was never defined, and America left its operations in Iraq open-ended.

Iraq itself was torn by a multitude of conflicting factions with very long memories: Kurds (about 25% of the population) would fight to separate from all Arabs; Shia Arabs (55%) would fight to do unto Sunnis what the Sunnis had been doing unto them; and the Sunni (15%) would fight to keep as much of their historic privileges as they could. Iraq's neighbors would take sides for their own reasons: Iran sent arms, men, and encouragement to their fellow Shia; the Saudis sent money, Wahabis, and suicide bombers to their fellow Sunni; and Syria provided sanctuary, headquarters, and transit routes as well as arms to their fellow Baath Party members, who were organizing the Sunni insurgency against the Americans and the Shia. In short, Iraq was full of, and surrounded by, people who killed for very particular interests. They knew *their* war. Our political class never figured out its own war.

Imagining that America's interest lay in achieving harmony among Iraqis, the U.S. government tried to effect a "national reconciliation"—in practice, offering concessions to the Sunnis and Baathists to entice them to give up their war. But the majority Shia wanted to shake off their Sunni masters, the Kurds were even less kindly disposed toward them, and the proclaimed goal of democracy posed an insurmountable problem. Iraq's national elections in 2005 confirmed that Iraq comprises not one people but several, whose desires are incompatible. Hence war. Our highly credentialed officials placed American troops in the middle of that war and kept them there in the service of an objective that none of the parties to the war shared. This made our troops everybody's target.

Only one fifth of American casualties came in what one normally thinks of as combat. Some three fifths came from "improvised explosive devices," roadside bombs, or other booby traps. That is, from our troops having to operate in what amounted to a constantly replenished minefield. About one fifth came from rules of engagement that prohibited our troops from defending themselves until after enemies had started trying to kill them. Although living in minefields and among people who are as likely to shoot you as not is contrary to military common sense and fits neither the definition of war nor of occupation, it was essential to a so-called strategy that required Americans to mix with hostile factions on their terrain. The field grade and general officers who made careers executing this "strategy" made their predecessors in Vietnam look like faithful stewards of their men's lives and forthright advocates of military truths to political power.

Exit Strategy in Iraq

As early as 2004 our officials had begun looking for an "exit strategy"—that is, for a way out of Iraq without looking too bad. The insurgency's Baathist leaders in Damascus demanded that the Americans establish a new government in Baghdad much like the Baath regime overthrown in 2003. But forcing such wholesale surrender upon the Shia would have taken an even bigger, more senseless war. So the U.S. government tried surrender at the retail level. In May 2004, it turned Fallujah over to insurgents in exchange for their no longer shooting at Americans. Immediately, Fallujah became the insurgency's fort, which the Marines had to pay with their lives to retake in November. Despite American soldiers' valor and sacrifice, their government's objectives and rules of engagement could not secure such an "exit strategy," much less victory.

Nor did U.S. force determine the war's outcome, because the violence in Iraq after April 2003 had always been (and always would be) about which Iraqi group would get what, at which other group's expense. A "united and democratic" Iraq had always been an exclusively American chimera. Freedom from the Baath regime was always going to mean ethnic-religious separation and cleansing. The practical questions always were: What would be the boundaries between Kurdistan and an Arab world with which it would deal as little as possible? And because Sunni and Shia Arabs could not get away from each other so neatly, what would the relationship be between the Shia in Baghdad and southern Mesopotamia, and the Sunni in the northwest of what had been Iraq?

The resolution of these questions and the end of America's involvement began in February 2006, when Sunni insurgents bombed the Shia Golden Mosque in Samarra. This loosed the Shia's fury. They squeezed the Sunni out of most of Baghdad and into western Iraq, torture-killing thousands, and the question quickly became not how much the Sunni would *gain* by war, but how much more they would *lose*. Only the Americans could stop the Shia.

Hence the Sunni insurgents asked American commanders for a version of the Fallujah deal:

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they would stop shooting Americans, would withdraw the welcome they had extended to Saudi suicide bombers, and would turn over people whom *they* designated al-Qaeda sympathizers. In return, the Americans would arm and pay the Sunni insurgents, now called "sons of Iraq," and entrust to them their zones' security. The Americans would also move lots of troops into Baghdad and other places where the Shia death squads had been raging. On top of that, the Americans would get the Shia government to promise to take the Sunni units into the Iraqi army, pay them, and continue entrusting security to them. The U.S. government grabbed the deal as a lifeline. The outline of the Sunni-Shia provisional settlement emerged. This was "the Surge."

According to conservative mythology, "surging" an extra 40,000 troops to Iraq crushed the insurgency. But American troops never crushed it. During 2008, the year of the Surge, there was *much less* contact between Americans and hostile forces, and two-thirds *fewer* casualties than any of the previous three years. American troops were used primarily to separate Sunni and Shia populations, especially in the Baghdad area, often by erecting physical barriers. Leaders of groups that had slaughtered Americans and Shia expressed delight that the Americans were leaving them—entrenched, better armed, better paid—in a superior position to press their enduring agenda upon the Shia after the Americans' departure.

In short, by turning Iraq's two main Arab communities over to the persons and groups strongest within them, having already done that in the Kurdish provinces, the U.S. government helped to consummate de facto Iraq's tripartite division. And so Iraq in 2010 looks very much like what would have resulted after the 1991 Gulf War, had our political class stood aside and allowed the Shia and Kurdish revolt to topple Saddam's regime—instead of keeping him in power, and later occupying the country, precisely but futilely to prevent its division. As the *New York Times*'s John Burns reported, "Six and a half years from the moment when American troops captured Baghdad on April 9, 2003, nothing is settled." After America's departure, the locals will do the settling. They never forgot their stakes. Our ruling class never settled what America's stakes were.

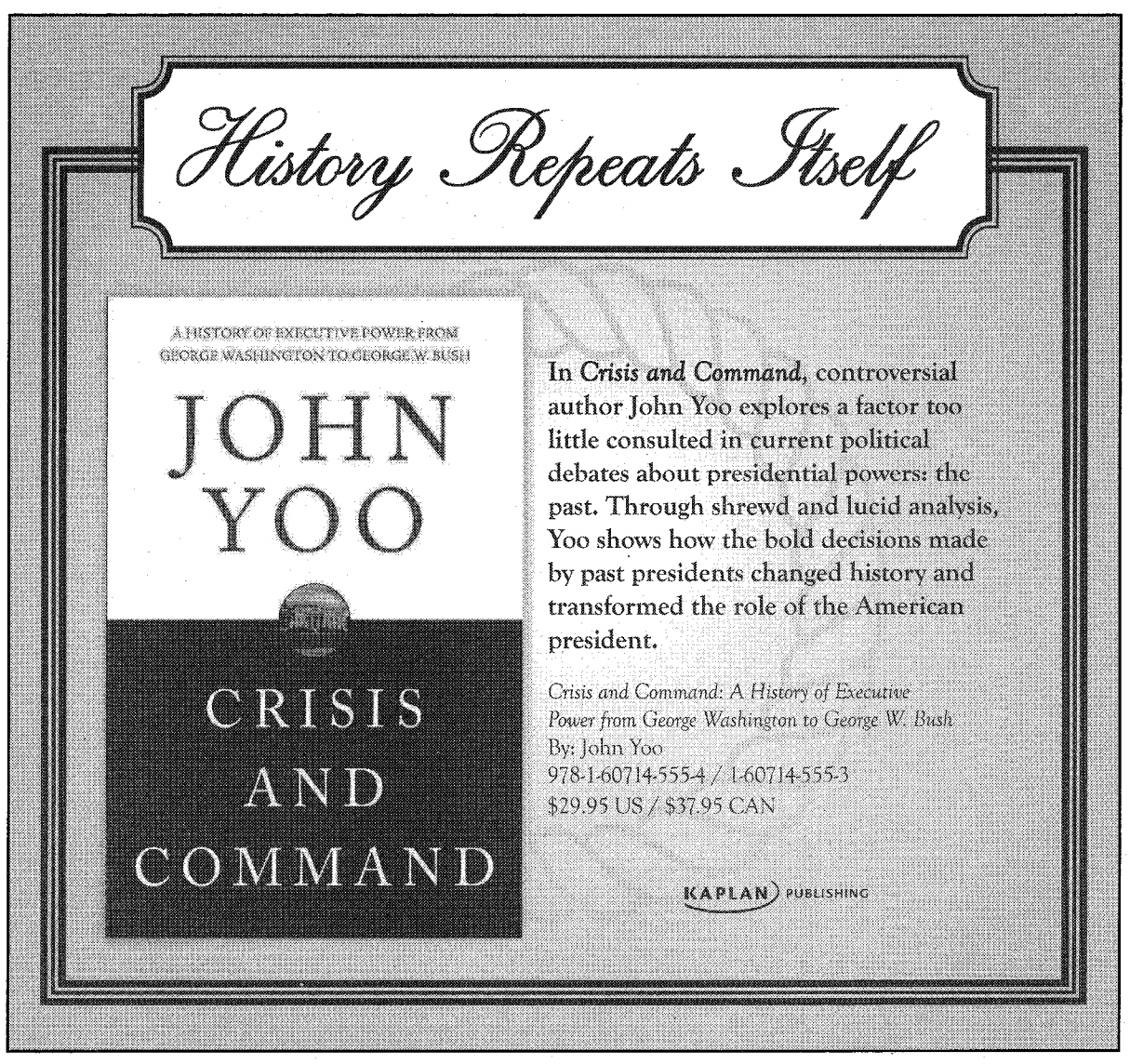
Accepting the Unacceptable: Iran

Just as military operations depend on how well strategy employs arms to serve well-chosen ends, so diplomacy depends on how well diplomats' words represent well-calculated actions to achieve such ends. Lucius Annius summed it up in the 4th century, B.C.: "How we act will affect the main issue more than what we say. Once we have set our plans in order, it will be easy to find words to fit our deeds." Diplomacy works only at the service of a competent ends-means calculus. First, set in motion events apt to make your version of peace happen. Then, express in words the coercive situation you are managing to a successful conclusion. Words can serve policy, but never substitute for it. But U.S. diplomacy has squandered the fruits of our military power by placing it at the service of nonsensical policy, and ended up by accepting what its words once had deemed unacceptable. Our dealings with Iran are a prime example.

U.S. diplomacy bears much responsibility for making Iran into an ever-worsening problem for America. From the 1950s through the 1970s, when Iran's royal regime was the fulcrum of American interests in the Middle East, our experts in foreign affairs persuaded its shah that secularizing his country would serve his own interests as well as America's. This helped make the shah a stranger in his country and vulnerable to the anti-American Ayatollah Khomeini. As the Ayatollah beat on the palace gates in 1978, the same experts concluded that America's interest lay in getting along with his prospective regime. When that regime seized the American embassy in Tehran along with the diplomats in it, the United States chose to respond to a textbook act of war with a combination of verbal abuse and token actions—what Theodore Roosevelt used to call "peace with insult," the most disastrous of policies. Our ruling class's Iran policy has been bankrupt ever since.

For example, our experts never considered sending a bill for the geopolitical favor that America did Iran by ending Saddam Hussein's rule in Iraq. Without a Sunni-dominated Iraq, Iran is freer to pursue its agenda against the Sunni world, and against America. Our diplomats might have demanded that Iran stop sponsoring Hezbollah lest perhaps the U.S. expeditionary force in Iraq add Iran's Kurdish zones to the new Kurdistan. Conversely, they might have considered asking Iran to support our mission in Iraq in exchange for the U.S. lessening support for the Sunni Arab regimes of the Persian Gulf. Competent diplomacy would have faced the Iranians with the choice between easy gains against ancestral Sunni enemies, and big losses inflicted by Americans who would pursue the Iranians from Iraq back into Iran. But U.S. diplomacy neither coerced Iran nor diverted it. Instead, it declared unacceptable various Iranian-backed militias' attacks on our troops in Iraq, and then accepted them.

Similarly, our ruling class has dealt with Iran's development of nuclear weapons by complaints, and declarations of unacceptability, followed by acquiescence. It forgot that giving in is less contemptible when not preceded by chest-thumping.



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To Iran's highly consequential weapons programs, our foreign policy establishment opposes grandiose words and inconsequential means. Under President Obama as under President Bush, public discussion reflects the high-level policy oscillation between bombing Iran's nuclear facilities and negotiating the Iranians into forsaking nuclear weapons, supposedly by threatening economic sanctions while offering the country full membership in "the international community." Both options are evidence of incompetence. Bombs and missiles could destroy some but far from all of Iran's nuclear program. They could start a war, but not finish it. Indeed, no one who advocates such strikes proposes a plan to bring hostilities to a successful conclusion, or to occupy Iran indefinitely, or explains why Iran's post-strike regime would abstain from rebuilding the nukes. On the other hand, those who advocate bargaining fail to see that their sticks and carrots are orders of magnitude too small for the objective they seek.

The economic sanctions our foreign policy establishment considers are unserious because they would not involve banning trade with any country that trades with Iran. Such secondary proscriptions are what make economic warfare serious, because they force every country to take one side or the other of the fight. But this is out of the question precisely because our establishment knows that its ritual statements that "the international community is united" in opposition to Iran's acquisition of nukes are untrue, and because it fears Iran's nukes less than it does displeasing Russia and the European Union.

Is a "grand bargain" to turn Iran's Islamic Republic away from anti-Americanism possible? We will never know, because serious bargains are beyond our establishment's imagination. The Iranian regime's rhetoric aside, most Iranians' immanent foreign policy concern is their millennial confrontation with the Arab Sunni world, wherein Wahabism preaches killing the Shia to Arabs inclined to do it. For a generation, by far the most hurtful thing America has done to Iran has been to take sides against it in that struggle. An American offer to switch sides, henceforth to support Persian and Shia interests as it did in the days of the shah, might or might not move Iran to reset itself on the international scene in ways pleasing to America and reassuring to Israel. Such a reset would also involve rejecting Russia's 30-year role in the Islamic Republic. Were there to be such a bargain, the resulting peace would deprive nuclear weapons of much relevance.

The nuclear issue would also loom much smaller within a peace achieved by a no-nonsense American war. Such a war should leverage opposition to the regime by focusing on the very authorities who have earned their compatriots' hatred by their ever more corrupt and repressive rule. These elites happen to be America's enemies, the very people responsible for kidnapping U.S. diplomats and for making war on U.S. troops in Iraq. We should insist that these individuals be killed or turned over to us, and we should squeeze Iran's economy and food supply until this happens. The regime's overthrow from within would soon follow. Military operations would become necessary if the regime retaliated by trying to close the Straits of Hormuz or by unleashing Hezbollah and other terrorists—all of which America could crush disproportionately, to the regime's discredit. But to direct the war against the nuclear program rather than against the regime would be counterproductive because it would preclude a peace acceptable to Iran's majority, which has an inalienable interest in the Shia world's strength and status *vis-à-vis* the Sunni.

Serious war and serious diplomacy are both beyond our foreign policy establishment. Its fecklessness contributed to making Iran a problem, and condemns us at present to accepting the unacceptable. Iran's people may well resolve that problem by changing their regime by themselves, for their own reasons. The less they listen to Washington's wisdom, the likelier this will be.

Afghanistan: A Foregone Conclusion?

Reforming problem nations by using force, but not really making war, has been American statecraft's default tool since the 1960s. It failed in Vietnam and, more recently, in Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti. During the 2000 presidential campaign, George W. Bush's strong criticism of nation-building was part of the longstanding conservative "hard-line" position that America should pursue its own interests, by war if necessary, without meddling in other nations' business. But when the Bush Administration turned the "war on terror" into a nation-building counterinsurgency in Iraq, the Left opposed this as "Bush's war." Because the liberals' "soft line" now occupied the opposite pole from nation-building, partisan logic led many Republicans to regard the latter as the new conservative hard line. Between 2002 and 2009, however, that logic became more convoluted as the Left criticized Bush for not devoting even more troops to nation-build Afghanistan—but only as a way of urging withdrawal from Iraq. The Bush Administration increased troops in Afghanistan from 2,000 to 68,000, plus some 30,000 support personnel, to pursue what seemed to have become Washington's bipartisan modus operandi.

By 2009 nation-building in Afghanistan had turned bloodier and less popular. When Barack

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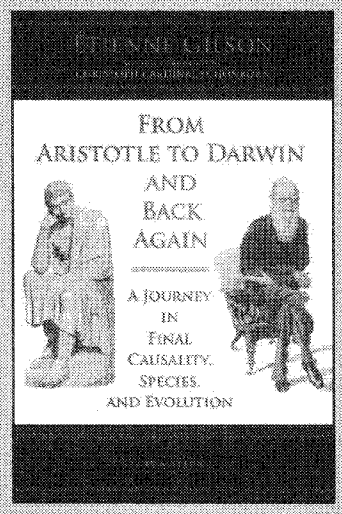

FROM ARISTOTLE TO DARWIN AND BACK AGAIN

A Journey in Final Causality, Species, and Evolution

Etienne Gilson

Foreword by Christoph Cardinal Schönborn

The great philosopher and historian of philosophy Etienne Gilson sets out to show that final causality or purposiveness and formal causality are principles for those who think hard and carefully about the world, including the world of biology. Gilson insists that a completely rational understanding of organisms and biological systems requires the philosophical notion of teleology, the idea that certain kinds of things exist and have ends or purposes the fulfillment of which are linked to their natures—in other words, formal and final causes. His approach relies on philosophical reflection on the facts of science, not upon theology or an appeal to religious authorities such as the Church or the Bible.

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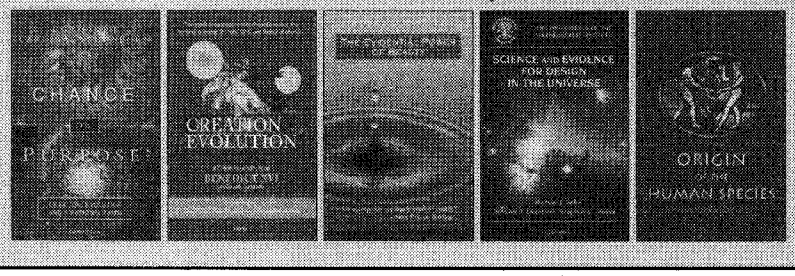

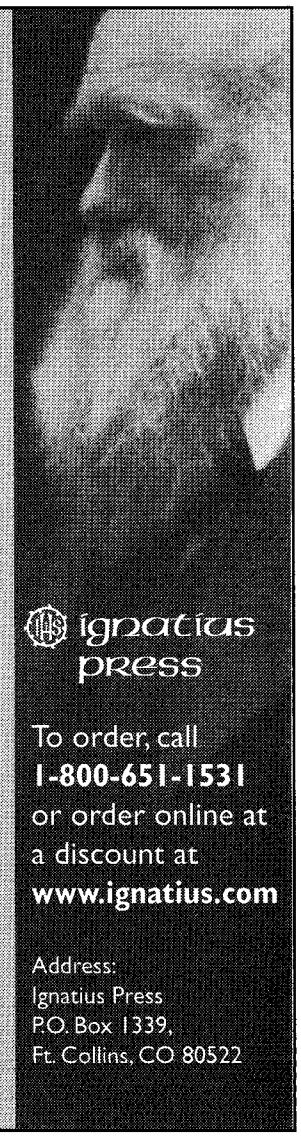

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Obama's election completed his party's control of Washington, Democrats had to choose between leaving Afghanistan, which most of the party really preferred, and devoting even more resources to a style of foreign affairs in which they no longer had to pretend to believe, but in which many Republicans actually had come to believe. But the Democrats feared that advocating withdrawal would brand them as endangering America by abandoning Afghanistan to the terrorists.

So as 2009 ended, President Obama finessed this dilemma with a pretend strategy: more troops would be sent...to immunize Democrats against Republican criticisms. But the president also required more of European allies than they would deliver, and set "performance benchmarks" for the Afghan army that its members' loyalties to their several tribes made it impossible to meet. These unmet requirements would be the putative basis for withdrawal—after the next election cycle. Clever as this strategy might be in domestic politics, it foreclosed seriousness about the serious things happening in Afghanistan.

In November 2009, the *New York Times* reported from northern Afghanistan's Kunduz province that "[t]his year the Taliban arrived 'with lots of cash, new dollars, and guns.'" The Taliban had vanished from Kunduz eight years earlier. Once, they hardly ventured into places like Kunduz, where warlike Tajik tribes dominated. But now the U.S.-led international coalition had displaced the Tajik warlords and entrusted security to the Afghan army, composed largely of Pashtuns (hence easily infiltrated), backed up by the non-shooting Germans. This situation had become typical in areas of mixed population. But wherever Pashtuns are a majority, more and more people now find safety and money, and see a future, in calling themselves Taliban.

What can explain the remarkable fact that U.S. forces, disposing of practically endless money, firepower, and mobility, became enablers of the people they had routed eight years before? What can turn overwhelming power into self-defeating impotence? Only ideas that insulate against reality. Self-evidently, neither of the options that our establishment lets into its digestive system—a long occupation with counterinsurgency forces, along with nation-building in a non-nation; or more remote-controlled pinprick drone strikes based on third-hand intelligence—is relevant to stopping the flow of dollars, guns, Wahabi missionaries, and suicide bombers into both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

Officially, our establishment supposes that the insurgents' lavish financing and modern arms come from local opium traders, despite little evidence of eleemosynary links between the Taliban and drug trafficking. Our establishment chooses not to see that dollars arrive in Afghanistan and Pakistan by courier from Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, whence also come guns, Wahabi missionaries, and suicide bombers. In fact while parts of Saudi Arabia's vast royal family and vaster entourage send these things, its government openly sponsors Pakistan's most problematic party, Nawaz Sharif's Muslim League. Yet the notion of tackling international problems at the source is taboo in Washington.

But so is making war, in the old-fashioned meaning of the term. When Pakistan's army launched a no-holds-barred offensive into the western mountains against any and all who had organized against Pakistan, nothing but dysfunctional ideas kept the U.S. government from ordering its forces in Afghanistan to run the same sort of pitiless campaign up the same mountains' eastern slopes to crush an inferior force between two superior ones.

Not that conventional war is the most economical means of dealing with enemies in Afghanistan. Where tribal allegiances are paramount, where outsiders are worth the guns and goods they bring to the tribe minus the trouble they cause and whatever enemies come after them, the calculus of conflict is straightforward: make it deadly for any tribe or clan to entertain your enemies, by empowering *its* enemies to do unto it as they please. This is how it's usually done. This is how the United States defeated the Taliban in 2001: by supporting the Tajiks and Uzbeks but not otherwise interfering with them. This is how the Taliban have retaken much of Afghanistan in recent years: by making offers to clans and families that they dare not refuse—to take good money to fight against people they don't like much anyway, or to be treated as enemies. But because American authorities see the tribes' and warlords' selfish interests as obstacles to nation-building, they dispense money and arms through central institutions for central purposes, asking the recipients to be part of something that includes their enemies and is led by foreigners. Thus do Americans spit against Afghanistan's prevailing winds.

This is because the logic that flows from the heights of American universities through the bureaucracies and the war colleges, which transforms conscientious junior officers into nodding generals, forecloses fruitful options leaving only the choice between the futility of nation-building counterinsurgency and the deadly unseriousness of drone strikes and hit teams. Typical of our ruling class's decisions, President Obama's December 2009 Afghanistan plan committed to both: to nation-building while denying that he was doing so, and to remote strikes while holding out no hope of eliminating enemy strongholds.

On December 30, 2009, a suicide bomber's killing of the CIA officers to whom he had been providing intelligence provided a glimpse into the underlying reason for the strikes' limited effectiveness: the provenance of the information on which the targeting is based. Although our military controls the missile firing drones exquisitely, the CIA's congenital scarcity of information disposes it to look none too closely at what it does receive, or at its purveyors. Hence CIA's notion of who might actually be in the places that it designates as Taliban targets comes disproportionately from Taliban agents such as Hammam al Balali, who bombed our CIA officers *after* he had fooled them. That may explain why, after each strike, the U.S. government claims success against terrorists while Afghans and Pakistanis claim that innocents have died.

More and more of Afghanistan's tribes seem to be realizing how disastrous for them is the Americans' inept wielding of mighty force and endless cash among them. Curbing the Taliban may happen if and when these tribes manage to reestablish traditional balances of power and restraint among themselves.

THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO RUN OUR GOVernment and occupy the commanding heights of our society seldom miss the fact that their ideas have not yielded the results they expected. But their very status and authority blind them to the reason why: the false axioms of their own miseducation. Lacking intellectual diversity and flexibility, they double down on their bets and dig deeper in failure. Akin to coaches who lead good teams to loss after embarrassing loss at the hands of inferior ones, they should be replaced. But firing a ruling class is hard. Replacing it is still harder. Nevertheless, just as sports teams rebuild by bringing in new talent, by reemphasizing blocking and tackling, pitching, fielding, and hitting, so countries intent on renewal must begin by rejecting the fashions—and the fashionable—of the age, by going back to basics, and drawing solutions for new problems from statecraft's perennial principles.

Angelo M. Codevilla is professor emeritus of international relations at Boston University. His most recent book is Advice for War Presidents (*Basic Books*).

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Book Review by Jeremy Rabkin

UNSERIOUS

U.N. Ideas that Changed the World, by Richard Jolly, Louis Emmerij, and Thomas G. Weiss.
Indiana University Press, 336 pages, $65 (cloth), $24.95 (paper)

THIS IS A DREARY VOLUME. IT CLAIMS TO be about "ideas," but that turns out to mean only that the authors disdain mere facts. Instead of serious analysis or evaluation, the book catalogs findings from "the U.N. Intellectual History Project." When completed, this larger project is supposed to provide 16 separate volumes on the "intellectual history" of different international programs. So it is almost an international institution in its own right. It is repeatedly mentioned here by its suitable acronym, UNIHP.

Think of this book, then, as the sort of commissioned official history that even a subsidized academic press will only publish with an additional hefty subvention. In other words, it's the counterpart to *Rear Mirror Views of a Changing Social Landscape: The Research Trajectory of the Michigan Society for Sociological Studies, 1955–2005*. But our authors have expanded that sort of "study" until it encompasses the entire United Nations network of organs, agencies, advisors, committed participants, and specialized researchers, topped with a special introduction by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Then they throw in the necessary acknowledgements to the MacArthur and Rockefeller Foundations, all the governments of Scandinavia, and various specialized conference centers around the world.

If you don't find this depressing, you should tell your friends what medication it is that helps you stay so cheery. Or leave a large tip for your bartender.

The authors, Richard Jolly of the University of Sussex and Louis Emmerij and Thomas Weiss of the CUNY Graduate Center, seem highly sedated themselves, no doubt from hours spent editing all those previous volumes in the UNIHP series. Still, scientists who study bird calls or bee buzzings often make interesting findings about animal behavior, without claiming the birds and bees are actually thinking when they engage in their various mating calls. Even a book of this sort has clinical or ethnographic interest, indicating how a certain type of person—say, the type that would actually try to read the other UNIHP volumes—can develop warm feelings for specialized agencies of the United Nations.

The first thing that strikes one in this volume is how remarkably abstract it is. To call it journalistic would be an insult to journalism, even the sort of low, vulgar journalism practiced by reporters for preening broadsheets like the *New York Times*. Journalists like conflict, journalists like villains and victims, journalists like "narratives." What this book offers is inventory.

Just to get started, the book requires four pages of specialized U.N. acronyms, ranging from CDP ("Year of the Child Committee on Development Planning") to UNRISD ("U.N. Research Institute for Social Development") and so on and so on, down to the WFP ("World Food Programme").

We never read about who does what to whom, exactly. We read about conferences and processes and problems. We read about "R2P" proposals—U.N. bureaucratize for "responsibility to protect." We do not read about the millions slaughtered in central Africa over the past two decades under the eyes of U.N. peacekeepers, or the tens of thousands of children raped and sexually abused by those same peacekeepers. It doesn't seem to matter who needs protection from whom or by whom. It's as if listing or talking, however vaguely, were its own contribution to world peace. This is, above all, a book about "agendas."

THE NEXT THING THAT MIGHT STRIKE an innocent reader is the constant disparagement of commerce and markets. While mass murder is scarcely mentioned, we hear a lot about corporate globalization's unchecked power. It's as if buying and selling were inherently suspicious without enough prior talk.

If private activities are threatening, then some sort of public control must be the solution. Another notable characteristic of this book is that it offers the United Nations as problem solver in a whole range of areas: development, human rights, gender relations, saving the environment. When talking about emancipation of women in traditional societies, should international forums really leap to explosive agendas like abortion or rights for homosexuals? Don't ask—the authors don't.

Meanwhile, the United States is repeatedly criticized for holding itself aloof from U.N. projects like the International Criminal Court. It does not cross the authors' minds—or if it does, they keep such discordant thoughts to themselves—that the United States, with troops actually fighting around the world, has different interests from most of the ICC's European sponsors who do not have troops capable of fighting, even in their own countries. Nor do they ask why India and Pakistan, China and Russia, Israel and almost all Arab countries have also taken a pass on the ICC. They seem so fixated on international institutions as the answer, they can't remember what the questions were.

On one point, however, this book is startlingly clear. According to the authors, the U.N. may be seen as simply a gathering of its member states (the "First U.N.") or it may be seen as an organization with its own officers and staff and corporate missions (the "Second U.N."). *U.N. Ideas* emphasizes that there is also a

> Third U.N....comprising NGOs, academics, consultants, experts, independent commissions, and other groups of individuals who routinely engage with the First and the Second U.N. and thereby influence U.N. thinking, policies, priorities and actions. The key characteristic of this third sphere is its independence from governments and U.N. secretariats.

So lobbyists and critics and hangers-on aren't just trying to influence the U.N., the way thousands of such advocates try to influence Congress in Washington. They are, from the authors' viewpoint, as much a part of the U.N. as federal courts are part of our federal government at home. But lawyers and judges expend great efforts to define the proper limits of judicial power; lobbyists have wide freedom because, unlike judges, they are not responsible for deciding.

Perhaps it makes sense that the Third U.N. is not accountable to governments or anyone else and still claims to be a pillar of the United Nations. It's the most talky component of a system that is so much about talk, the most visionary component of a system that is so devoted to fantasy, the most irresponsible component of a system that is never really held responsible for achieving anything in the real world.

And who else but the Third U.N. would compile 16 volumes of UNIHP?

Jeremy Rabkin is a professor of law at George Mason University.

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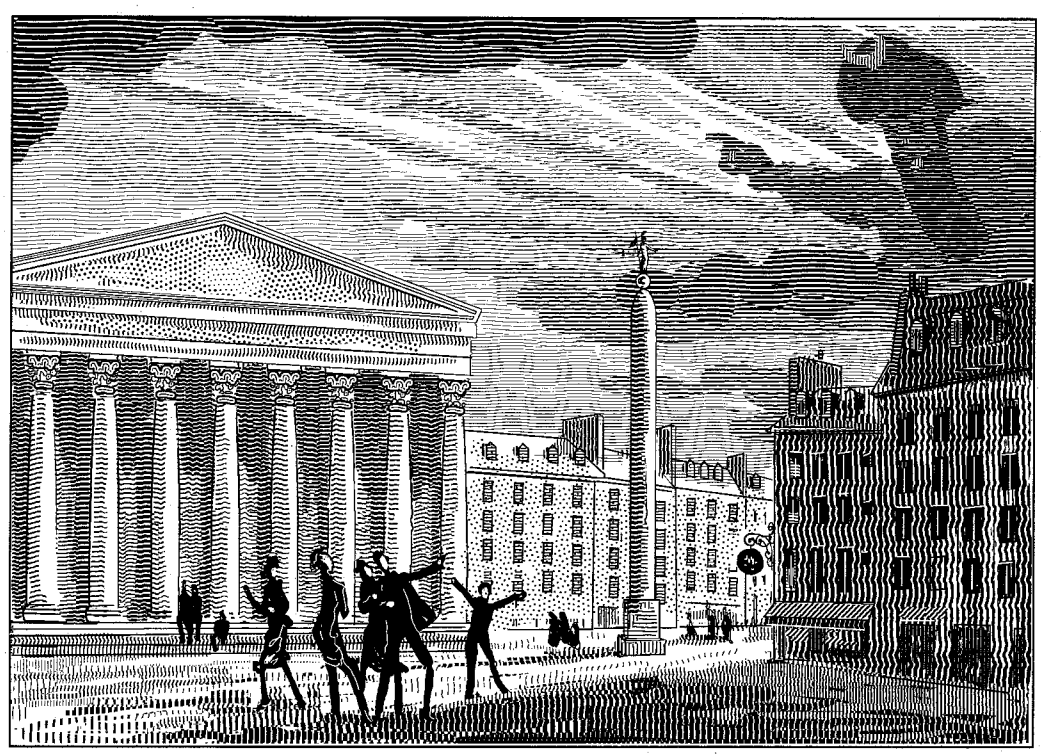
Book Review by Gerard Alexander

The Incoming Tide

Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam, and the West,
by Christopher Caldwell. Doubleday, 432 pages, $30



From the start, many Americans saw Europe as corrupt and decadent, prone to aristocratic politics, venal economics, and predatory wars. We might call this the republican image of Europe. Later, Americans came to see Europe as a living museum, good for visiting to see relics of the past. This is the American tourists' conception of Europe. And at least since 1945, Americans have considered Europe an experiment in social democracy. In America's current health-care debate, conservatives invoke Europe in just this way with caution and concern, and liberals with occasional praise or envy. Call this our social-welfare image of Europe.

To this list, Christopher Caldwell would add a fourth image. He sees Western European countries plagued by crime and other indicators of a fraying, even rent, social fabric, their core liberal values and way of life challenged by dissenting minorities, and their societies unprotected by political elites who are temperamentally and intellectually too flabby to defend what deserves to be defended and to resist what needs to be resisted. This is the neoconservative view of Europe, not in the sense of calling for an invasion (we tried that), but as in the critique of U.S. society that Irving Kristol, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, James Q. Wilson, and others mounted in the 1960s and '70s. Kristol and the other original neocons saw the American experiment at risk in those years. They warned that the minimal social cohesion and agreement on values required for a stable, effective liberal society were under assault, most flamboyantly by campus demonstrators and urban rioters, and most corrosively by rising crime. In addition, intellectual radicals were making demands that stood to undermine the foundations of liberal democracy. To the neocons' disgust, many politicians, social commentators, and institutional leaders—instead of standing up to all this—flinched, compromised, and capitulated.

A columnist for the *Financial Times*, contributing writer for the *New York Times Magazine*, and senior editor at the *Weekly Standard*, Caldwell sees many of the same dynamics at work in Europe, but with a twist. The forces currently laying siege to the citadels of European liberalism are millions of immigrant and first- and second-generation European Muslims, whose families originated mainly in North Africa and Turkey.

European integration has of course permitted migration across its internal borders, and many residents and citizens of European countries categorized today as "foreign born" are in fact transplants from elsewhere in the European Union (E.U.). But during their great post-World War II economic boom, West European countries also invited in large numbers of laborers from outside the region, most famously under the label of *Gastarbeiter*—guest workers. As that name implies, their presence was assumed to be temporary. But the workers saw it otherwise, and started to make homes for themselves on European soil.

Economic downturns ostensibly closed the doors to new immigrants from outside the E.U. in the 1970s and 1980s. But family reunification and then waves of people seeking asylum from wars and worse ensured that Europe's immigrant populations continued to grow prodigiously. Crucially, even as what might be called indigenous Europeans are having many fewer children—author Mark Steyn calls this "the gelded age"—these immigrants from outside the region are having many children. The result, Caldwell says, is not just that in "almost all Western European countries, the population of immigrants and their children approaches or surpasses 10 percent." It is that

> [a] fifth of the children in Copenhagen, a third of the children in Paris, and half of

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> the children in London are born to foreign mothers. French-born women have 1.7 children apiece, but foreign-born women in France have 2.8 children. Tunisians, Turks, and Moroccans average between 3.3 and 3.4, more than their counterparts in their home countries.

As a result, many cities will almost certainly eventually become dominated by people whose family histories trace to North Africa or South Asia.

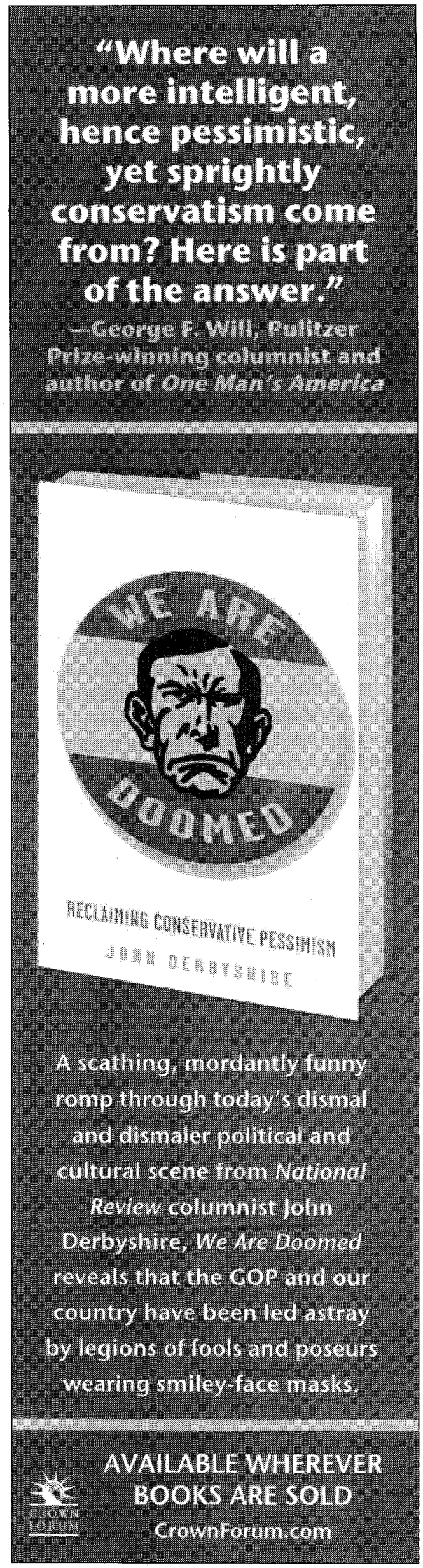
Caldwell concludes that "[t]he demographic and cultural weight of Islam in the world continues to grow, and Europe is the place it is growing fastest." And it is the Muslim-ness that is the issue for him. Comparable numbers of Latin Americans have immigrated to the United States, but he points out that these Hispanics largely share other Americans' religious heritage and attitudes toward marriage, national pride, and many other aspects of social and political life. That makes them good candidates for long- and even medium-term assimilation, even as they help reshape American culture along the way, through food, music, and other contributions.

In contrast, Caldwell insists, Europeans are "not dealing with an ordinary immigration problem at all, but with an adversary culture." He says that many European Muslims do not and will not anytime soon share core values with their new fellow citizens, and in too many cases have not developed basic allegiance to their new countries. Compromised or even dual loyalties may explain why, say, British Muslims volunteer for the military at startlingly low rates, why they refer to the U.K. as "my country" at low rates that *decline* among younger respondents, and—most disturbingly—why a substantial slice voiced support for the horrific 2005 London bus bombings and why a few even volunteer to fight in Iraq as insurgents targeting British soldiers. On more workaday issues, Caldwell observes, Muslim faith has big implications for gender roles, dress codes, foods, and sexual mores. These topics add up to much of the stuff of daily life, and have led diverse European Muslims to demand institutionalized accommodation on meals, holidays, gender segregation, dress codes, polygamy, speech, and much more.

Caldwell thinks it important that Muslims in France, Britain, Germany, and other countries seem highly confident in making such demands, suggesting that this reflects a civilizational confidence now visible in Islam's adherents worldwide. For example, in Germany, "68 percent of Turks think their religion is the only true one, versus just 6 percent of [non-Muslim] Germans." This cultural confidence is accompanied by political ambition. Polls suggest that large minorities, even majorities, of European Muslims want to see their new countries become Islamic states or adopt sharia law. This suggests to him that Muslim assimilation into mainstream European societies is unlikely anytime soon. He notes that in Britain, where the record of integration is in many ways the best, in "virtually all polls, British Muslims stand out as significantly more radical than all other European Muslim populations." The current global spirit of Islamic pride may be leading once-distinct Muslim communities across Europe "to converge into a larger Muslim culture," which suggests that many of the region's younger Muslims are if anything "dis-assimilating."

Caldwell reserves special attention for Europe's political and intellectual elites. He compares their behavior to the "hand-wringing inaction" with which so many American leaders greeted grave problems in their own midst in the late 1960s. In Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands, and elsewhere, elected officials, bureaucrats, and commentators repeatedly have proven unable to respond to illiberal challenges from activist Muslims. He is not sure how to explain this. At some points, he refers to an intellectual failing, saying these leaders lack a "moral code that would give answers" to immigrants. At others, he detects a self-loathing, according to which "Europeans were coming to despise their own cultures" and thus proved unwilling to defend them in the face of demands that they, and not immigrants, be the ones to change. And at yet other points, he paints Europeans as downright intimidated by the Muslims among them, perhaps because of events like periodic riots in France, the savage murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004, the murderous Islamist response to the Danish cartoons the next year, and Salman Rushdie's years in hiding.

Whatever the cause, European elites have flinched. They have shown they lack the backbone, self-confidence, or *je ne sais quoi* to defend their way of life. And this matters because the habit of sacrificing liberal practices to spare illiberal Muslim sensibilities might lead to the compromising of modern liberal values themselves. Caldwell does not identify a lot of movement so far down that particular road. His best example is expanded speech codes, which increasingly criminalize certain types of speech that "offend" listeners, Muslims or otherwise, and the general ostracizing of commentators who express concern over these illiberal trends. He remarks



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acidly that "[a] democracy cannot long tolerate a system that makes an advanced degree in sociology or a high government position a prerequisite for expressing the slightest worry about the way one's country is going."

Just as the original neoconservatives warned that weakness or prevarication in the face of a challenge invites disrespect and aggression, Caldwell suspects that "[t]he largesse, nonjudgmentalism, and leniency of European governments bred contempt" among its challengers. He closes by warning that "[w]hen an insecure, malleable, relativistic culture meets a culture that is anchored, confident, and strengthened by common doctrines, it is generally the former that changes to suit the latter."

But, also like the neocons of old, he is not without hope. Above all, like them, he insists that the reassertion of social authority can rescue even dire situations. France is front and center here. Caldwell predicts that France is best-positioned for "fully assimilating the children and grandchildren of immigrants," because its still-muscular "republican traditions" endow its possessors with the moral self-confidence needed to insist that everyone at the table must share rules of the social and political game. So, for example, a French proposal to ban Muslim girls from wearing veils in public schools was greeted with large demonstrations and threats of worse to come. "But once France's resolve became clear, the marches fizzled out" and the vast majority of those affected complied with the new rules.

For Caldwell, this resolve has a name: Nicolas Sarkozy. France's president has insisted that democracy is strong, not weak, so long as its citizens make it so. He insists that true integration of immigrants must be made available, and also mandatory. In the face of bullying, he exudes "toughness," insisting that "[t]he response to riots is not spending more money and putting it on the back of the taxpayer. The response to riots is to arrest rioters." This is designed not to crush or exclude but to bring out the best in everyone: "When they see you're not afraid, they respect you more," and become better citizens as a result. "Sarko" also champions what Americans call affirmative action in education and job-seeking. He seems to offer immigrants a grand bargain: you will be brought into the Republic, but on certain essential matters, this must be on the Republic's terms. In the process, France might well change but the Republic will not.

A robust stance of this kind might be capable not only of cautioning extremists and encouraging European Muslims to integrate successfully, but also of rallying Europe's "silent majority," to whom Sarkozy has made virtually explicit reference. Caldwell comments that many average Europeans have searched for "some sign of state action against the Islamization of institutions," and have responded favorably to politicians willing to defend social order in responsible ways.

This cause for hope is predicated on what Caldwell considers vast cause for concern. But how justified is that concern, which he shares with a number of others? Caldwell's argument that Europe's Muslim communities are maturing a large-scale illiberal impulse is based on evidence that is less statistical than anecdotal, i.e., individual stories from over a half-dozen countries. That his data is not more systematic is largely the fault of Europe's scholarly and journalistic institutions, which have largely steered clear of the trends and events that he says should preoccupy us. One need look no further than the speed with which France's 2005 riots disappeared into the research memory hole. But whatever the cause, we are left unsure to what extent dis-assimilation, illiberalism, and extremism characterize Muslim Europe. The closest Caldwell comes to systematic measures are public opinion polls on disparate issues, often conducted on single-country bases. These reveal nasty or worrisome opinions held by sizable minorities and sometimes majorities of European Muslims. But in a world rife with cheap talk and posing, it remains unclear what relationship exists between survey responses and the kinds of authentic beliefs on which behavior is based.

There is an even more important concern, though. Clearly, many European Muslims are being affected by a global surge in Islamic identity politics. As Caldwell puts it, even Muslims who may not practice their faith still believe in "Team Islam." This era of Islamic fervor has its historical counterparts in other communities. But those very parallels offer some caution to those who would extrapolate from current events. In the other cases, periods of fervor faded in time. In the case of contemporary Islam, that fading might be only a decade or two away. If only we had confidence that Western Europe, in every sense of the term, could afford to wait it out.

Gerard Alexander is associate professor of politics at the University of Virginia and a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

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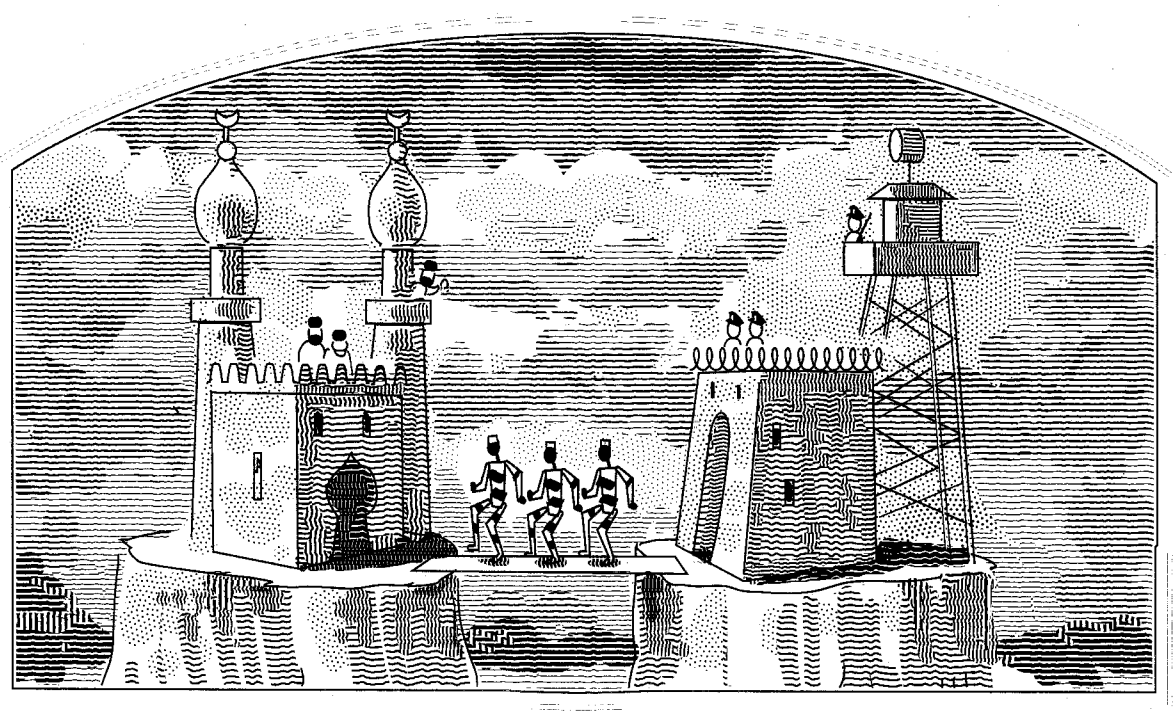
Book Review by Theodore Dalrymple

Islam's Captive Audience

Islam in American Prisons: Black Muslims' Challenge to American Penology,
by Hamid Reza Kusha. Ashgate, 230 pages, $89.95



A few years ago a friend of mine, a doctor working in a British prison, was asked by a member of the Parole Board why he thought so many prisoners changed religion while incarcerated. "It's for the change of diet, I expect," he replied.

In those days, of course, one took such matters lightly, and the member of the Parole Board laughed. A change of religion was either to Buddhism or to some sect with dietary requirements difficult or impossible for the prison authorities to comply with (that was the point). In my own experience as a doctor working in a prison, the new Buddhists often wore a ponytail, spoke quietly so as not to frighten the insects, and had committed crimes of the most frightful violence. With regard to the justification and necessity for such violence, they had undergone a welcome *Gestalt* switch.

But the specter of radical Islam in our prisons has made the matter of conversion to another religion altogether more serious. We fear that our prisons are becoming recruiting grounds of, and schools for, extremists and terrorists. A book on the subject of Islam in American prisons, therefore, could hardly fail to be of interest.

Nonethless, the author of this book has found a way to make such a book uninteresting. It is not his fault alone: a lot of the blame must attach to the publishers. It is abundantly obvious that Hamid Kusha's first language is not English, and it may not even be his second, which of course is not his fault; but the publishers, secure presumably in the number of libraries around the world that, given its title, will feel obliged to acquire it, and more or less certain that they will not be able to sell it to anyone else at such a high price, have not felt it necessary to go to the expense of using a competent editor to correct the hundreds and hundreds of grammatical errors and malapropisms in the text. "Conscientious" is used for "conscious," "mannerisms" for "manners," "canonized" for "canonical," and so forth: the list is nearly endless. But why bother with correction when it would not have increased sales?

In short, *Islam in American Prisons* is by far the worst-edited book put out by a reputable publisher that I have ever read.

The book might nevertheless have been redeemed had its content been worthwhile. Alas, Kusha, an associate professor of criminal justice at the University of East Carolina, thinks no more clearly than he writes, and only about a third of the text is of indubitable relevance to its title. The first two thirds consists of an irrelevant, murky, disorganized, meandering history of American jurisprudence from colonial times that neither analyses nor synthesizes, but only confuses. Insofar as a consistent or fundamental argument can be made out, as through a glass darkly, from this book, it is this: the American legal system offers, theoretically, equal protection under the law. But young black males find themselves incarcerated out of all proportion to their demographic weight in the population. They experience this as an injustice; Islam is a universalist doctrine that offers such young men a way out of their existential impasse. Therefore, they convert to Islam in considerable numbers.

Kusha is not, in general, a great examiner of his assumptions. For example, he repeatedly refers to the experience of imprisonment as "criminogenic," that is to say, that criminals sent to prison become even more criminal as a result of contact with worse or more experienced criminals than they. But two lines of evidence from England, at least, suggest that prison prevents the further commission of crime rather than promotes it. First, prisoners in England have rates of recidivism inversely proportional to the length of their sentences; those sent to prison for longer have lower rates. Second, criminals in England who are sent to prison on their first conviction have half the rate of recidivism of those given other types of sentence on their first conviction. The same might not be true in America, of course, but it would have to be shown not to be true, and Professor Kusha is unaware of this.

In asserting that young black men are disproportionately sent to prison, with the implication that they are therefore unjustly sent to prison, the author uses crude rates of imprisonment per overall population. But

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nothing at all can be concluded from such statistics. One might as well say that the equally disproportionate number of Jews among Nobel laureates for science is evidence of a world-wide Zionist conspiracy, or that the prominence of black sportsmen is the consequence of unfair positive discrimination. The question is vastly more complex than the author allows, or is even aware of.

Moreover, his assumption that an injustice is done to a man if he is sent to prison when another man, who has committed exactly the same crime, is not sent to prison, is not warranted. Suppose, for example, that I have committed a burglary and am sent to prison for it. I hear of another man who has done the same, and who moreover is as likely to be a recidivist as I, but who is not sent to prison. Assuming that imprisonment for burglary is not itself unjust, am I right in feeling that an injustice has been done me? Surely the injustice consists of the failure to imprison the other man, not in my imprisonment; in other words, the injustice has been done him (and, of course, his victim). It is the merest superstition to suppose that, if justice were done, everyone would be better off than he is, and that consequently there would be fewer prisoners.

Kusha talks of the absent male syndrome: the fact that, in so many black households with children, there is now no male authority figure. It is precisely here that a little historical analysis might have been useful, for the fact is that the syndrome, if that is what it is, is not immemorial, but of comparatively recent origin. His suggestion that the excessive imprisonment of black males adds to this problem is implausible, since it seems to me inherently unlikely that if the young prisoners were not in prison they would be providing careful moral and social guidance to their offspring.

If it is true that prison exerts a protective effect against crime—and European evidence suggests that it does, since overall crime rates in the different countries of Western Europe are inversely proportional to the rates of imprisonment per crime committed—then the high imprisonment rate of young black men is not an attack on the black population, but a benefit that it receives. Two things must here be remembered: first that the great majority of victims of crime are the poor, criminals on the whole not being great travelers, and second that, even in the most crime-ridden areas, the class of victims is very much bigger than the class of perpetrators, since each perpetrator is likely to commit many crimes. Hence failure to imprison perpetrators would mean shifting the costs of crime entirely on to those who are most likely to be its victims, i.e., the poor. High imprisonment rates per crime committed are, in fact, a form of progressive taxation.

We come now to the third of the book that deals with Islam in prison. If it is possible to be deeply shallow, Professor Kusha's account is deeply shallow. First, he makes Islam sound as if it is some kind of New Age philosophy that believes in the healing power of crystals and the tepid bath of universal benevolence. There are, of course, many liberal, tolerant Muslims, but it is intrinsically unlikely that hardened criminals—robbers, drug-dealers, murderers—would go in for such a milk-and-water doctrine. One would expect them to go the whole hog, if such an expression is permissible in the context.

Second, he sometimes treats conversion to Islam as if, in the ironic words of Gibbon with regard to the spread of Christianity over the civilized world, its first and primary cause were "the convincing evidence of the doctrine itself." Truth, like goodness, has nothing to do with it.

There is another problem with his account: not only does he provide few statistics (which may not be his fault, for they are very difficult to obtain and analyze), but there is no evidence in the book that he has ever met any of the people he is talking about. His book, which is neither truly abstract nor concrete, particular or general, suffers enormously by comparison with Farhad Khosrokhavar's brilliant, limpid account of Islam in French prisons, *L'islam dans les prisons* (2004).

However, he does provide two useful clues as to the nature of the phenomenon of conversion to Islam in American prisons, the significance of which he fails utterly to understand. First, he admits that conversion is overwhelmingly a male phenomenon: female prisoners do not convert. Second, he implies that the great majority of conversions are to the Nation of Islam brand of Islam, which is heretical, to say the least, for mainstream Muslims.

Let us take the first point: what does it mean? A high percentage of black prisoners have lived in a social (or unsocial) world in which men do not take much in the way of responsibility for their offspring. This means that they have their sexual liberty, which is gratifying in short, acute bursts, but not very satisfying in the long term, or conducive to self-esteem. They are important to their womenfolk only for the brief periods of their presence. Islam offers them, then, a philosophical justification for the continued domination of women, such domination being the quid pro quo for more responsible behavior. It is hardly surprising if this bargain does not appear such a good one to women prisoners, whose experience of men as the inseminators of their children is that, at best, they bring shoes for their offspring in return for continued sexual favors.

With regard to the second point, the Nation of Islam's political content is much stronger than its religious content. Quoting from one of its manifestos, Kusha demonstrates pretty conclusively that resentment is what drives the whole business:

> We believe that our former slave masters are obliged to provide...land and that the area must be fertile and minerally rich. We believe that our former slave masters are obliged to maintain and supply our needs in [a] separate territory for the next 20 to 25 years.... As long as we are not allowed to establish a state or territory of our own, we demand not only equal justice under the laws of the United States, but equal opportunities—NOW!... We want the government of the United States to exempt our people from ALL taxation as long as we are deprived of equal justice under the laws of the land.... We want all black children educated, taught and trained by their own teachers.... The United States government should provide, free, all necessary text books and equipment, schools and college buildings.

This is clearly a political, not a religious, program. The great advantage of giving the program a patina of Islam, however, is that it allows converts to believe that, in changing their lives, they have not surrendered to the dominant society around them, that they can secure the advantages of conventional respectability without having to admit a personal defeat. Of course, there are many forms of Christianity that would enjoin them to such respectability; but in so far as Christianity is the traditional and dominant religion of the United States, accepting it means accepting American society, and their own heretofore inglorious part in it.

Preposterous and bad as the doctrine of the Nation of Islam might be, it is of immense value to the United States. Conversion to Islam in European prisons is more likely to be to a Salafist version of the religion, which in turn is likely to be much more dangerous in practice than Louis Farrakhan's half-baked rantings. A few disturbed individuals among converts in European prisons will try to solve their existential problems by taking others with them when they go—the shoe bomber and his ilk. Members of the Nation of Islam are less inclined to such antics, precisely because their goals are so earthbound.

A good book about Islam in America's prisons remains to be written.

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Book Review by James Q. Wilson

Free to Use

Addiction: A Disorder of Choice, by Gene M. Heyman.
Harvard University Press, 216 pages, $26.95

People who disagree about whether certain drugs such as cocaine and heroin should be illegal tend to argue from strong ideological positions. Those who defend a legal ban emphasize the need for society to reinforce weak personal self-control and thereby help preserve the character and dignity of human beings; those who wish the drugs to be legal argue that human freedom must be protected from a government that, despite lacking any power to decide what people read, tries to decide what they shall eat or snort. To reinforce their views, those who support a legal ban say that the costs are worth the reduction in the number of users, while those who object to a ban claim that the costs exceed any possible benefits.

Aware of the two sides in this endless argument, readers may approach Gene Heyman's new book with suspicion. Heyman, a lecturer in psychology at Harvard Medical School, surely will be endorsing one side or another in this debate. But no: Heyman does not disclose his views on the legal issue; instead, he offers a remarkable book about the extent to which people can choose to use or not to use narcotic drugs. He argues that addiction is not a disease, it is a choice.

This is not the conventional view among many, probably most, researchers, managers of drug treatment programs, and the mass media. The National Institute on Drug Abuse has distributed statements saying that addiction is a disease, and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association defines "substance dependence" as "compulsive" drug use that leads a user to continue drug use despite significant drug-related problems. Clinicians usually echo these sentiments. Recent findings that drug addiction is influenced by the genetic makeup of some people strengthen the argument; after all, if genes determine our behavior, then there is nothing we can do about it.

Heyman raises some serious questions about this view. For one thing, the percentage of Americans who become dependent on narcotic drugs has changed dramatically over time. Among people born between 1917 and 1936, less than 1% abused drugs, but among those born between 1952 and 1963, nearly 14% did. If baby boomers are 14 times more likely than Depression-era Americans to become addicts during their lives, then something else must be going on. (By comparison, the two generations are quite alike in the chances of becoming schizophrenic or depressed.)

Another analysis supports this view. The percentage of women who test positive for cocaine use is four times greater in poor inner-city neighborhoods than in smaller urban areas, and *that percentage* in turn is four times greater than the percentage in poor rural areas. To most people there is nothing surprising about this fact; many would explain it by saying that "of course" impoverished inner-city women are more at risk for drug use, just as they are more at risk for being the victims of a crime. But when we think this, we are admitting that people have a choice: in some places they create a market for drug use, and in other places they do not. Drug abuse, in short, is not an equal opportunity disorder.

From these facts Heyman draws a conclusion: "drug availability and changes in attitudes, values, and perhaps sanctions or perceived sanctions explain the large differences." But if attitudes and sanctions affect drug use, how can we explain the familiar claims that people in drug treatment programs are rarely if ever cured and that "once an addict, always an addict"? The explanation is easy: these claims are not true.

Heyman draws on three major national surveys to show the falsity of the argument that addiction is a disease. The Epidemiological Catchment Area Study (ECA), done in the early 1980s, surveyed 19,000 people. Among those who had become dependent on drugs by age 24, more than half later reported not a single drug-related symptom. By age 37, roughly 75% reported no drug symptom.

The National Comorbidity Survey (NCS), done in the early 1990s and again in the early 2000s, came to the same conclusion: 74% of the people who had been addicts were now in remission. As with the ECA, the recovery rate

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was much higher than in the case of psychiatric disorders. The National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC), done in the early 2000s with more than 43,000 subjects, came to pretty much the same conclusion.

WHY, THEN, DO SO MANY CLINICIANS say that addiction is a disease? Perhaps, Heyman suggests, it is because they only work with addicts in treatment and are not aware of the life history of drug dependence. And some may think that if addiction is shaped by inherited traits (as it is), then nothing can be done about it.

But virtually every aspect of human behavior has a significant genetic component. Heyman notes that although alcoholism and religious beliefs are importantly shaped by genes, people also retain control over the extent to which genes determine behavior. People at risk for alcoholism will usually not become alcoholic if they live in a dry county or have a spouse who insists on sobriety; people who are genetically predisposed to have fundamentalist beliefs may not join a church or go to meetings where those beliefs are expressed. As I have written elsewhere, genes shape about half of our personality dimensions. This means, for example, that people who are more likely to be neurotic have a steeper hill to climb to avoid that ailment than people who are not at risk. Steeper, but not unconquerable.

Though almost all voluntary activities are shaped by genetics, they are also shaped by the consequences of activities themselves. These consequences, Heyman writes, include benefits, costs, and values. A truly involuntary activity, like a true disease, is elicited by a stimulus, e.g., a bacterial invasion or a body blow: benefits and costs make no difference.

If you believe that addiction is a disease and is not influenced by human choice, then surely it would be cruel and unjust to punish addicts. This would be like scolding, fining, or imprisoning persons for always getting lost because they had Alzheimer's. Instead, we should presumably require health insurance companies to provide the same coverage for heroin or cocaine addiction as they now do for cancer or heart disease.

Some people take this view under the mistaken impression that people can no more control their addiction than they can prevent the onset of Alzheimer's. But the data Heyman has gathered shows that most people do overcome addiction. Addiction is not Alzheimer's.

This, of course, leaves open the question of whether drug dealers should be punished. If we punish a person who sells cocaine, would that not be akin to punishing one who sells alcohol or cigarettes? Answering that question depends on how you compare liquor or nicotine addiction with cocaine addiction, and what you think are the benefits and costs of rendering the trade legal or illegal. Heyman does not address these questions. In my opinion, it would be a grave mistake to add to the number of people who have a destructive addiction to alcohol an additional large number of people addicted to coke, heroin, or methamphetamine.

To be clear on this matter we must decide what proportion of the population we should let become self-destructive addicts, how bad that addiction is for the people who suffer from it, and what the costs and benefits are of enforcing a law against drug abuse. I believe that the abuse of narcotics is destructive of human character, that legalizing certain narcotics would significantly increase the number of addicts, and that the costs of their behavior (on themselves, their families, their job prospects, and their education) outweigh the costs of enforcing laws that keep addiction levels at lower rates than they would be if the drugs were legal.

HEYMAN AND THE READER MAY OR MAY not agree with my view, but everyone should acknowledge that drug abusers do in fact respond to incentives. One of the most dramatic incentives is being married. Married people are about as likely as single people to have schizophrenia and are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, and various phobias. But married people are less than half as likely as single people to be drug addicts. The data do not permit us to say whether marriage discourages addiction or whether addicts have a hard time getting married, but clearly it makes a difference.

The drug treatment programs that work involve managing consequences. A Vermont program reduced addiction by paying people in vouchers if they stayed clean, and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) helps those who stay in the program acquire a mentor.

People with strong religious beliefs are less likely than atheists to become drug dependent, and more generally addiction is less common when the values of the culture are hostile to it and more common when those values erode. One of the ways society makes its values clear is by making actions against those values illegal and reserving praise for people who act in accordance with them. Though Heyman does not mention it, judicial programs such as Project HOPE in Honolulu that quickly punish arrested drug users with small penalties sharply reduce drug use and the attendant criminality.

Whatever your views on drug use, Heyman's book is very helpful for understanding the nature of drug addiction.

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Book Review by Anthony A. Peacock

Democrats' Protection Act

Voting Rights—And Wrongs: The Elusive Quest for Racially Fair Elections,
by Abigail Thernstrom. AEI Press, 336 pages, $20 (paper)

Few scholars in the United States have transformed the debate in an area of law and policy the way Abigail Thernstrom has. Her 1987 book, *Whose Votes Count? Affirmative Action and Minority Voting Rights*, shattered many of the reigning orthodoxies that had surrounded the Voting Rights Act (VRA). Although the original law passed in 1965 had been extremely successful in ensuring Southern blacks the freedom to vote, by the 1970s the VRA had taken an illiberal turn toward the blatant promotion of racial representation. For daring to reveal the extent to which it had been surreptitiously transformed into a tool for race-preference affirmative action, Thernstrom was pilloried by the academic community, so much so that in 1992 the respected civil rights historian Hugh Davis Graham described her book's "unusually hostile reception" as indicative of just how much the debate over voting rights policy "crackled with acrimony."

Now an adjunct scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and vice-chair of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, Thernstrom shows in her new book, *Voting Rights—and Wrongs*, how the Department of Justice, beginning in the 1990s, acted as a law office for minorities and their advocacy groups, frequently misinterpreting the legislation to drive it further and further toward a mandate of proportional representation based on race. Ignoring Supreme Court precedent, the Department of Justice brazenly demanded from states what the Court in 1995 described as "max-black" redistricting plans—plans which forced jurisdictions to maximize the number of congressional districts in which minority voters could elect minority representatives. In some cases, the congressional districts were so bizarrely drawn they resembled bug splats and Rorschach ink blots.

The Court, which initially chastised the Justice Department for these racially configured districts, abandoned its 14th Amendment concerns in 2001. As Thernstrom writes,

> The Voting Rights Act, as it had come to be interpreted, mandated districting plans that ensured racially "fair" results. The Court never questioned the constitutionality of that mandate; its quarrel was solely with its implementation—the *excessive* emphasis placed on the racial identity of voters in the drawing of racially determined district lines. [Emphasis in the original.]

Except for Justices Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia, the Supreme Court continues to accept that the VRA covers vote "dilution" issues, and must strive for racial "fairness" in elections. But as Thernstrom's subtitle indicates, this is an elusive, indeed impossible, goal to achieve. As one federal judge has remarked, the Voting Rights Act has become a "Serbonian bog."

The incoherence of the now vast VRA jurisprudence is legendary, and Thernstrom does a fine job detailing example after example of the absurd lengths to which courts, Congress, the Justice Department, civil rights groups, politicians, and academics have gone in their attempts to rationalize today's egregious racial politics, in which plainly partisan disputes are transformed into inflammatory racial conflicts. Things have gotten so absurd that in recent cases Leftist groups have tried to argue that virtually any Democrat—whether a minority or not—elected with black or Hispanic support should be protected by the VRA. In 2006, advocacy groups tried to argue that Martin Frost, a prominent white Democrat from Texas, should be protected as a minority candidate of choice under the Act. Although Democrats lost that one, Republican legislators rewarded them by voting in droves for the 2006 Voting Rights Act—once again demonstrating their stupidity and pusillanimity on race issues—which will likely give the Democrats exactly the outcome they sought in the Frost case. Thernstrom calls the new legislation "a Democratic Party dream" because if minorities do reliably vote Democratic, "all districts in which they played a role in electing Democrats (white or black) would likely be considered sacrosanct." The key provisions of the new VRA will not expire until 2031.

Thernstrom concedes that minority representation in the sense of blacks representing blacks may have had an important place in American politics:

> Race-conscious districting to end a long history of black political exclusion in the South had much in common with race-conscious school assignments to create unified school systems. But other policies that involve racial sorting can be sharply distinguished. Context matters.

Here I would respectfully disagree. Thernstrom is on a very slippery slope because liberals have always defended racial preferences in law by arguing that racial classifications must be "contextualized." However defensible the claim that mandates for minority-controlled electoral districts were necessary to break white political hegemony in the Jim Crow South, there was no warrant for these mandates in the Voting Rights Act. That said, Thernstrom acknowledges that whatever justification there was in the past for racially configured districts as an entrée to "a sector of American society basically reserved for whites," that time "has finally faded." Blacks are now equal political players in American politics, no longer requiring special treatment in electoral law.

Voting Rights—and Wrongs is a superb account of the VRA over the last 45 years. Abigail Thernstrom compellingly argues that today's law is little more than a "Democratic Protection Act." It is, in short, more wrong than right, an impediment to genuine racial progress and to federalism, stamping the South with an indelible badge of inferiority by promising to hold it in federal administrative receivership for the next two decades.

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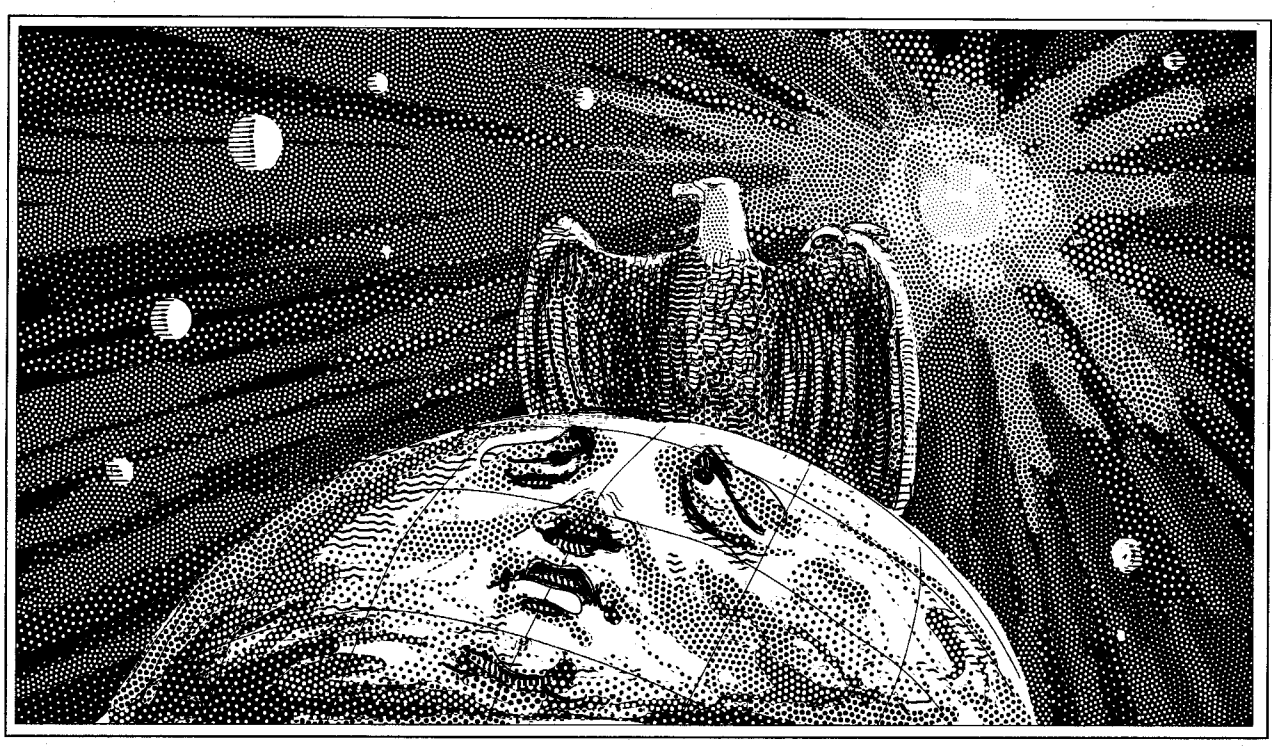
Book Review by Walter Russell Mead

A New Look at U.S. Foreign Policy

Union, Nation, or Empire: The American Debate over International Relations, 1789–1941,
by David C. Hendrickson. Kansas University Press, 480 pages, $34.95

Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security—From World War II to the War on Terrorism,
by Julian E. Zelizer. Basic Books, 592 pages, $35



A quiet revolution has been taking place in the historiography of American foreign policy. The conventional progressive and realist approaches of the 1930s and 1940s—respectively rooted in the work of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Hans Morgenthau—are being challenged by new ways of interpreting the American past. The new scholarship is already changing the way the history of American foreign policy is taught at many leading universities, and over time it is likely to change the way policymakers think about and craft foreign policy in the 21st century.

The father of the New Look revisionism is Walter McDougall. In 1997, *Promised Land, Crusader State* challenged two generations of received scholarly wisdom as McDougall took on two basic tenets of Old Look history: that the United States had been largely isolated from world affairs before 1941 (with the brief and luminous exception of Wilson's visionary leadership in World War I) and that American foreign policy could be understood in isolation from broader currents in American life. Subsequent work—by writers as varied in their ideological leanings as Michael Lind, Anatol Lieven, Robert Kagan, and myself—has extended and revised the core critiques in McDougall's work. The discussion of the history of American foreign policy has come to dwell increasingly both on the continuities (including enduring controversies) in policy and on the strong roots of American foreign policy in domestic political events and cultural currents.

Two recent books add to the New Look literature. David C. Hendrickson's *Union, Nation, or Empire: The American Debate over International Relations, 1789–1941* examines the history of American thought about international politics and finds in this domestic tradition a source of America's success in managing the international system after 1941. Julian Zelizer's *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security From World War II to the War on Terrorism* is an overview of recent American foreign policy that integrates domestic politics into the story in ways that will leave doctrinaire realists scratching their heads. Like other writers engaged in this systematic rethinking of the history of America's world role, Hendrickson and Zelizer bring their own values and ideas to the discussion. Both authors would probably place themselves on the liberal side of the political spectrum; as with all serious historians, however, their work has a value that goes beyond party.

Hendrickson, who teaches at Colorado College, has one big idea, and like all the really good ones, it is brilliantly simple. The United States, he observes, was surprisingly well prepared to take the lead in a large-scale alliance of democratic states after World War II. What in the American political tradition prepared the country for this role, especially since no such peacetime alliance had ever before endured? His answer is one that no future student of the subject will be able to ignore. In the incessant U.S. debates about federalism, Hendrickson finds a rich literature about the nature of the international state system and its various forms of association. As Americans debated what their Union ought to be—both in relation to the states that com-

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posed it and to the foreign states that surrounded it—they developed a nuanced understanding of the interaction between democratic states, which enabled them to respond creatively and flexibly to the questions of international politics after World War II.

Conventional historical wisdom once held that the United States was uniquely unprepared for global leadership in 1945. Hendrickson quite successfully demonstrates the opposite, showing that at least in some respects no country in the world had undergone a longer or better apprenticeship in the new types of international politics that would dominate Euro-Atlantic relations after 1945.

Hendrickson's picture of American history is both like and unlike the vision Robert Kagan offered in his 2006 book, *Dangerous Nation*. Both figures see American foreign policy primarily as a question of ideology, and both identify what they believe to be the correct ideological view with which all should agree. They differ sharply, however, over what the correct approach involves. For Kagan, there is a line of patriotic foreign policy that moves from George Washington through Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt down to George W. Bush, and a line of queasy, sometimes treasonous misgiving that runs from the later Calhoun through Jefferson Davis, Grover Cleveland, and William Fulbright to John Kerry and, presumably, Barack Obama. In *Union, Nation, or Empire* the liberal internationalist vision emerges as the lodestar of American foreign policy, and Kagan's assertive nationalism is seen as the negative shadow of the one true creed.

An examination of both books, each with its own richly argued narrative steeped in thoughtful, credible analysis of the American past, reinforces the view I presented in my 2002 book *Special Providence*, that the American foreign policy tradition consists of several independent and competing world views. They all claim to be the One True Doctrine for foreign policy, but none of them can quite be accepted unreservedly. Hendrickson, Kagan, and I nonetheless all agree that one cannot understand American foreign policy today without an understanding of its deep roots in the full sweep of American history.

A PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS at Princeton University, Julian Zelizer attacks conventional scholarship from another direction in *Arsenal of Democracy*, aiming his fire at the structural realists, whose claim is that the internal politics of states are largely irrelevant to their foreign policy. It is an attack with which I sympathize; American foreign policy has always been shaped by our domestic politics. As Kagan and others have demonstrated with great precision and acuity, it is impossible to interpret America's approach to expansion before 1860 unless sectional politics are kept firmly in view. The failure to attempt further territorial expansion after the Mexican War was due almost entirely to domestic battles between slave states and free states, as the former wanted to annex slavery-friendly territory like Cuba and parts of Central America, something abolitionist opinion firmly opposed. In the same way, certain post-Civil War decisions—such as that not annex Cuba and what is now the Dominican Republic—were affected more by the domestic racial and cultural momentum within the U.S. than by any consideration of external enemies who were, or were not, in a position to thwart such a move.

Arsenal of Democracy performs the signal service of carrying this analysis through the Cold War, and it demonstrates the degree to which even in moments of great crisis in relations with the Soviet Union, American foreign policy had to respond to domestic political pressures of various kinds. Realists sometimes compare states to billiard balls responding to external events. In Zelizer's account, on the contrary, presidents adjusted policy to reflect inescapable political realities at home. Zelizer shows how the two parties competed to be seen as the more capable guardian of national security and how success or failure in the national security game affected the broader political fortunes of each.

Arsenal is much more than a contribution to political science; it is a compelling and enlightening read. From the time of FDR into our own day, Zelizer provides vital context for understanding both the actions and the motives of American decision-makers. Not everyone will agree with all of his judgments, but most readers will find him a generally fair-minded if not always infallible guide to 60 years of politics high and low.

IF THE SOLID SUCCESSES OF BOTH *UNION, Nation, or Empire* and *Arsenal of Democracy* demonstrate the vitality of New Look historiography, the problems of both books point to the immense amount of work that remains to be done on the history and nature of American foreign policy. There is perhaps no subject in the world of so much importance to so many people that has been intellectually under-resourced to a comparable degree. Those of us who have tried our hands at "big picture" accounts of this complex phenomenon well know that much of the spadework, on which sweeping historical syntheses must ultimately rest, has yet to be done.

The unfinished business in American historical studies greatly complicates Hendrickson's task of writing what is essentially an intellectual history of American foreign policy. His sources—the speeches and writing of statesmen and political thinkers for the most part—are sound and judiciously deployed. But American politics was, and is, a complicated and raucous business. What is the relationship between what statesmen said for the record and the sometimes uglier motives that animated what they actually did? Books like Michael Holt's magisterial *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party* (2003) rather painfully underline the irrelevance of the high flown rhetoric of 19th-century politicians to the actual policies promoted in smoke-filled rooms. How much of the rhetoric that Hendrickson cites was "patriotic flapdoodle" intended to mask intentions and policies and how much of it represented the serious intellectual convictions of responsible decision makers?

In any case, most of the debate that he follows takes place among elites. The relationship of elite debates to American politics changed throughout the period he covers. Are we reading the equivalent of high-minded NPR commentary, expressing the desires and aspirations of a gentry audience but as out of touch with real politics as Henry Adams was with Tammany Hall? Or are we reading the equivalent of talk radio rants, expressions of popular opinion only imperfectly apprehended and reflected in the policy process? More broadly—and this is a question about the state of American historiography more than a critique of Hendrickson's rewarding and excellent book—how do we make sense of the growing mountains of evidence about what Americans in the past thought, said, and did about foreign policy?

Traditionally, historians have had to face the problem of a paucity of sources, building great towers of conjecture on a few dozen inscriptions, a handful of coins, various potsherds, and surviving fragments of manuscript. Once we reach the post-colonial period of American history, the opposite is the case. The volume of "evidence" swells to unmanageable proportions as all classes and conditions of American society produce gazettes and pamphlets and scurrilous libels, and as everyone from senators and presidents to small-town Fourth of July orators express themselves on the questions of the day.

The abundance of evidence combined with the increasingly complicated political life of the geographically and culturally diverse and decentralized American society of the era combine to make the past both dazzlingly bright and difficult to see. You can find nearly anything you

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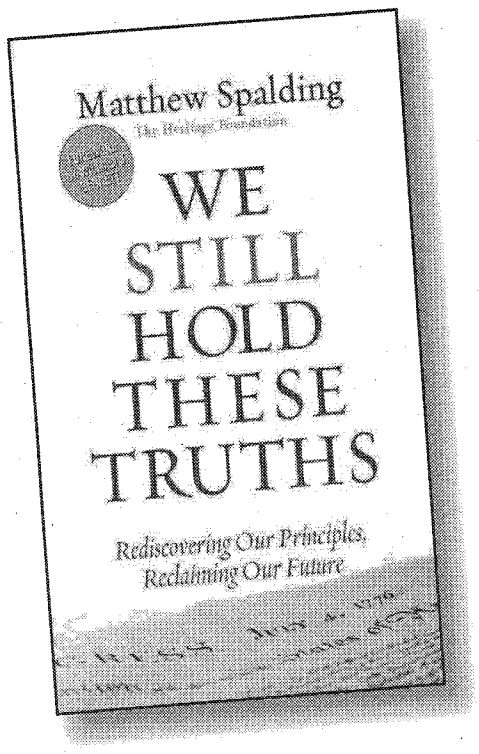

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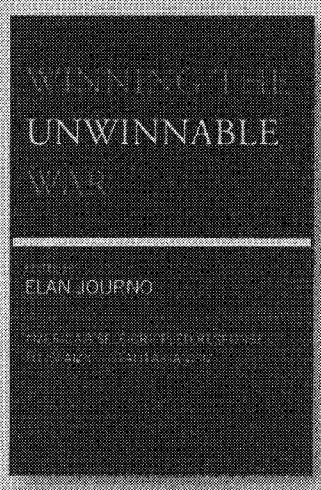
WINNING THE UNWINNABLE WAR

America's Self-Crippled Response to Islamic Totalitarianism

Edited by Elan Journo



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want in this sea of evidence; how do you decide what is important?

Zelizer faces similar problems. Once again, the political history of post-World War II America is so complex, and the stories of domestic politics and foreign policy intertwine in so many ways, that it is hard to decide what matters most. Zelizer says very little, for example, about the foreign policy consequences of the South's longtime suspicion of ambitious Yankee "nation building" dating back to Reconstruction. The quiet opposition of Georgia's Richard Russell to the Vietnam War and William Fulbright's more public dissent rested, in the first place, on widespread Southern white belief that do-gooding Yankee schoolmarm ideas about political change should be viewed skeptically, and in the second place upon deep-seated beliefs that non-white races were not capable of rapid Western-style development. The shift of the white South from its culturally pessimistic and Burkean (and also racist) traditional assumptions to a more activist, optimistic approach probably played a role in the rise of neoconservatism within the Republican Party, while the lingering aftertaste of those old ideas may have helped undermine support for George W. Bush's foreign policy as the Iraq War ground on.

I bring this up not with the intention of rapping Zelizer over the knuckles for some alleged blunder; *Arsenal* is too serious and accomplished a book to be reviewed in that way and no historian can cover every aspect of the topic. I am trying to help readers grasp the obstacles facing the historian of American foreign policy. Integrating the study of long, slow shifts like this with the analysis of specific political events is something that American historians as a whole need to think more about.

Though the first waves of New Look historians have challenged some myths and illuminated some mysteries, much more work is needed to develop historical methods adequate to the complexity and the importance of the subject. In the meantime, we can expect new and interesting books from the writers mentioned above and from other promising entrants into the fray. The study of American foreign policy remains the still thinly settled California of our time, whose streams run bright with nuggets and whose hills are stuffed with gold.

Walter Russell Mead is the Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for U.S. Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations, and the author, most recently, of God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World *(Alfred A. Knopf).*

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Essay by Allen C. Guelzo

The Bicentennial Lincolns

One of the most perceptive comments ever made about Abraham Lincoln came from Helen Nicolay, in a small book she worked up in 1912 from the notes her father, John G. Nicolay, had amassed from his four years as Lincoln's chief of staff in the White House. "A few characters live in history uncircumscribed by time or place," she wrote; yet we always manage to think of these characters in modern terms, as though they were "as vital and as modern as ourselves."

Just so with Lincoln. Helen Nicolay's generation, shaped by the Progressives (she was writing in the very year of Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive Party), was unable to "think of Lincoln in any environment except our own." But "the country [Lincoln] knew was vastly different" from the Progressives' America. Up till the Civil War, "America had been the land of individual effort, where those who were dissatisfied could go on into the wilderness and work out their doom or their salvation unmolested," and Lincoln's "life was essentially of the old era." He had no lessons to teach about the new era "of great industrial and social processes" condemned in Woodrow Wilson's first inaugural address (a year after Nicolay's book was published). "People have sought to make him a prophet for this generation," Nicolay said, but "the truth is that Lincoln was no prophet of a distant day."

> He made his own career by individual effort. His childhood, on the edge of civilization, had on the one side the freedom of the wilderness, and on the other the very few simple things which have been garnered as necessities from the world's useless belongings. His lawyer's earnings, at their highest, were only a pittance, by modern estimate; and a hundred details of his letters and daily life—like his invitation to an audience in the Lincoln-Douglas campaign, to meet him "at candlelight," which was not a figure of speech but an actual condition, showed how completely he was part of that vanished time.

Of course, it was possible to respond to Nicolay's judgment about Lincoln's historical remoteness in three ways. The most obvious, and the most superficial, was to ignore it, and this is the path taken by that endless stream of leadership gurus and historical second-guessers who want to strike Rodinesque poses and ask "WWLD?" as though Lincoln were an animated figure in a wax museum who could be made to mouth any of the current pieties on current issues—the Internet, climate change, stimulus packages. Another, more serious response to Nicolay's warning was to embrace it, and go one better. This was the way chosen by Richard Hofstadter in his scorching 1948 essay, "Abraham Lincoln and the Self-Made Myth," and that was to acknowledge that Lincoln and his ideals were, at best, relics of a simpler age which were now hopelessly lost to modern times, and the sooner we realized this, the better. "Had he lived to seventy, he would have seen the generation brought up on self-help come into its own, build oppressive business corporations, and begin to close off those treasured opportunities for the little man."

The third possibility, taken up by Harry V. Jaffa, was to insist it was modern times that were the problem, not Lincoln. Or rather, the problem was that modern times were being stealthily portrayed as so "different" from the past, so much of an evolution from the simplistic world of the founders, that Lincoln could be dismissed as an artifact, speaking the obsolete political language of pre-modernity—of liberty, of natural law, of the spirit of kings arrayed against the spirit of free men. Jaffa believes that the Declaration of Independence is the "transcendental goal" that guided all of Lincoln's politics; as such, "Lincoln's interpretation" of the founders

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The Inner World of Abraham Lincoln, by Michael Burlingame. University of Illinois Press, 416 pages, $24.95 (paper)

Abraham Lincoln: A Life (2 volumes), by Michael Burlingame. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024 pages, $125

commits him to "a transcendental affirmation of what [civil society] ought to be," regardless of historical time or place.

The first response is popular but insincere; the second and third responses are worth pondering, but they are inherently irreconcilable, mainly because they represent two mutually exclusive notions of what the American "experiment" (to use both Washington and Lincoln's term) has been and should be. Both of them have the virtue of realizing that what we say or think about the politics, the economics, and the ideas of Abraham Lincoln tends to be what we say or think about the viability of that experiment. That takes us into some very risky territory, which may be why so many of the Bicentennial Lincolns have preferred the popularity—and insincerity—of writing what amount to long essays on WWLD.

Lincoln as "One of Us"

It might have been a good idea if most of those who flew to their keyboards to write Lincoln books for the bicentennial had been forced, after a mandatory reading of Helen Nicolay's warning against making Lincoln into a ventriloquist's dummy, to click an "I Accept" box before writing a word. It might have saved them and us much subsequent grief. As early as September 2008, the *Boston Globe* had sighted a tsunami of Lincolniana curving toward us, with "at least 50 titles about Lincoln" in the works, including

> three complete biographies; books of essays and photographs; books about Lincoln as a youth, as president-elect, as a military leader, as a writer, and as an inventor; books about Lincoln and his family, about Lincoln as victim of conspiracy, about Lincoln and his connections with others—his secretaries, his admirals, abolitionist Frederick Douglass, scientist Charles Darwin, even the poet Robert Burns,

not to mention "at least seven children's books." And the justification offered for this dam-cracking tide of Lincolns (apart, of course, from simple literary opportunism)? In a few cases, it was to establish (in the spirit of Hofstadter) that Lincoln is beyond our grasp; in some others, that Lincoln demands a renewal of the principles of the founders (in the spirit of Jaffa). But in most, it turned into what we had the greatest reason to dread, a tedious, one-inch-deep effort to remodel Lincoln as "our contemporary." Because,

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as Harold Holzer put it so nonchalantly, "He is one of us, not like a prince or a king."

The persistence with which Lincoln has been made and re-made into "one of us" has a lengthy history of its own, which has been extremely well-told by Merrill Peterson in *Lincoln in American Memory* (1994) and by Barry Schwartz in *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (2000) and *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in Late Twentieth-Century America* (2009). The ease with which Lincoln has been re-configured into a plaster saint for every decade and every cause grows, ironically, out of Lincoln's own intensely private temperament. In an age of intense diary-keeping and memoir-writing, Lincoln left no easily accessed record of his interior life, and that created blank spaces which others cheerfully filled in with manufactures of their own imagination. (T.R. and Woodrow Wilson were especially guilty of this.) But much of the remaking and refashioning was also a tribute to the sheer magnitude of Lincoln's accomplishments, which even today are hard to grasp without blinking—the complete destruction of slavery, the inauguration of a new pro-business economic regime which lasted pretty well intact until 1932, and the assertion of a national American identity over sectional and state special interests. No one except Lost Cause bitter-enders or perverse literary sensation-seekers, had bile enough to spit at such a mountain.

The Bicentennial Lincolns, however, seem driven neither by mystery nor by admiration, but rather by a single-minded determination to make Lincoln precisely the modern-day soft Progressive that Helen Nicolay warned us Lincoln could never resemble. The most unashamed bid to transform Lincoln into a usable historical commodity emerges from the pages of Eric Foner's collection of essays, *Our Lincoln: New Perspectives on Lincoln and His World*, in which Foner unblushingly claims that "Lincoln remains in many ways our contemporary." This is, to say the least, a quixotic anthology: of its eleven contributors, only four have ever published anything substantial about Lincoln, and of those four, only two—Harold Holzer and Richard Carwardine—have really built scholarly reputations around the study of Lincoln. At least Holzer and Carwardine have something worth saying. As for the other seven, their chief credential for inclusion in this book seems to be a more than routine case of left-wing holy-rolling. And, sure enough, the less time the authors have spent in serious work on Lincoln, the more shrill the political annexation of his reputation. The most uncloaked example is David Blight, who imagines Lincoln as the victim of "Republicans"—he singles out Karl Rove, Ken Mehlman, Lynne Cheney, and George W. Bush—who "try to steal the meaning of American history and ride Lincoln's coattails while hating the government he imagined." Since "the modern GOP possesses a history it hardly wishes to know," its leaders find themselves driven to claim that Lincoln was a...Republican. Or perhaps more to the point, Blight thinks the modern Republican Party is so steeped in white racial supremacist ideas that it needs the Halloween disguise of "Lincoln the Great Emancipator" in order to make an appeal to black Americans.

Yet it is hard to say just *why* Blight wants to tear the Emancipator Lincoln from the grasp of "the conservative movement," since Blight himself frankly doubts whether Lincoln deserves much credit as the Emancipator. "Numerous books and some slave narratives have demonstrated that slaves' volition in this story [of emancipation] is more than worthy of our attention." Blight thus pledges himself to the "self-emancipation thesis," in which slaves themselves used the exigencies of the Civil War as opportunities to free themselves, running away to safety and liberty with the advancing Union army long before Massa Linkum ever got around to picking up his emancipating pen. The great problem with the self-emancipation thesis (which first received public currency not from serious academic research but from the Ken Burns PBS Civil War series) is the simple lack of evidence that any such mass "self-emancipation" took place. The thesis may serve the noble purpose of promoting "black agency" and African-American self-esteem. But neither Blight nor the authors of "numerous books" have ever yet produced a single statistic on the number of slaves who thus freed themselves without benefit of Lincoln, nor has Blight ever dealt with the singular fact that, absent Lincoln's proclamation, not a single fugitive slave would ever be other than a fugitive, rather than a legally free man.

The same determination to reset "the middle ground" of Lincoln interpretation well to the left emerges from the late George Frederickson's *Big Enough to be Inconsistent: Abraham Lincoln Confronts Slavery and Race*, which tips its hand at once in its title, snipped from W.E.B. DuBois. Frederickson sets the "extremes" of interpretations on the left with Lerone Bennett (Lincoln hated black people), and on the right with Richard Striner (Lincoln was "a closet racial egalitarian"), thus leaving the center to be occupied with "a third possibility," which is that "Lincoln's attitude toward blacks and his beliefs about race may have changed significantly during the war years." That any evidence for such a conversion experience is notoriously thin on the ground is no problem for Frederickson; the notion conforms nicely to that conceit so dear to Progressive hearts, that of the Arlen Specter Republican who gradually but inexorably is drawn to the Democratic light. Like Blight, Frederickson imagines that Lincoln was "pressured" into issuing the Emancipation Proclamation "by anti-slavery radicals" and "tens of thousands of slaves" who "had in effect freed themselves from bondage"—although like Blight's fugitive slaves, Frederickson offers no explanation of just how much "pressure" the tiny cadre of "anti-slavery radicals" actually exerted, or who, exactly, took the census that arrived at "tens of thousands" as the number who had "freed themselves."

But even if we grant for a moment that Lincoln underwent a change on race during the war years, Frederickson does not want us to become too lost in new-found love for Honest Old Abe. Not all the good-wishing in the world is ever sufficient to move Lincoln to where Frederickson really wanted him: "He simply did not share the Radical belief that the Civil War constituted a political revolution that had fundamentally changed the relationship between the states and the federal government." But if this is so, with what consistency can we talk about a Lincoln who is supposed to have undergone so much "change"?

A Polite Lefty

Two biographies from the bicentennial year give us a less dogmatic but still perceptibly Progressive Lincoln, the first from Ronald White, and the other, more oddly, from George McGovern. At first glance, the books could not appear more different. White's *A. Lincoln: A Biography* weighs in at 816 pages of text, while McGovern's *Abraham Lincoln* is only 208 pages long. White is a long-time academic, having taught American church history at San Francisco Theological Seminary for most of his career; McGovern earned a Ph.D. from Northwestern University, but his only visible claim to a place in the Lincoln literature is that he was once a presidential candidate, and a darling of the Democratic Left. The message in both books, however, is more or less the same. White, in the 1970s and '80s, was a peace activist who wrote extensively on race and the Social Gospel. Although almost nothing of that quondam activism survives as a distinct impress in this or his other two Lincoln books (*Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural* in 2002 and *The Eloquent President* in 2005), what does seep through every page of *A. Lincoln: A Biography* is a mellowed-out sense of Bay-area niceness. White's Lincoln "was always comfortable with ambiguity," had an "inclusive spirit" which was turned-off by "sectarian rivalries," practiced law as a "peacemaker," and believed "that each generation must redefine America in relation to the problems of its time." Think of Lincoln in love beads.

White has read much of the relevant literature on Lincoln—to the point where it is pretty easy to guess whose book he is using at any point without having to turn to the endnotes—but what he lacks is the attention

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to detail that comes from a long immersion in Lincoln sources. It was in the *militia*, not the "military," that "units elect their own officers"; James Metzker (the victim in the famous "Almanac Trial") did *not* die "while attempting to escape on his horse"; Henry Villard was *not* covering the Lincoln-Douglas debates for the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*; the voting in the Illinois 1858 elections was *not* "125,430 to 121,609" but rather 244,252 to 211,124; there is no evidence that Lincoln "had long admired the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher"; Leonard Volk was not Stephen A. Douglas's brother-in-law (he married a Douglas cousin); there is no evidence that Mary Todd Lincoln was her husband's "chief adviser" in political matters; John C. Frémont was known as the Pathfinder, not the "Pathmarker"; the number of soldiers killed at Antietam was approximately 3,600 (taking Union and Confederate together), not 6,500; James Cook Conkling did *not* read Lincoln's letter to the September 1863 mass Union rally in Springfield, Illinois, much less read it "slowly." This level of naïveté—I am reluctant to call it simple carelessness—is, unhappily, not mitigated by any new discoveries or dramatic interpretative shifts. In fact, there is scarcely anything in White's biography that could not have been just as easily learned from the Lincoln books currently in print. At the end, the best that can be said is that *A. Lincoln: A Biography* is a very nice book, by a very nice man, about a very, very nice president.

No such niceness, however, comes to the rescue of the McGovern biography. McGovern is almost as aggressive as Foner in trying to remodel Lincoln as Progressive mascot. McGovern scants all mention of Lincoln's Whig economics, and instead casts Lincoln the lawyer as a sort of legal Robin Hood, and Lincoln the president as the founder of a "people's republic." (A *what?*) Nevertheless, the book reveals moments when even Lincoln fails to live up to the peerless, *soi-disant* social democracy of George McGovern—for example, concerning the wartime suspension of *habeas corpus*. "The only oath an American president takes is to uphold the Constitution," McGovern intones, and because the nation may "need its constitutional protections even more in times of war than in the less turbulent times of peace," we are left to conclude that it would have been better had Lincoln left draft rioters unarrested, smugglers and blockade-runners undetained, and the Confederacy to go its merry way—as though the Constitution really were a suicide pact. What McGovern does find unarguably admirable in Lincoln is his "remarkable military leadership," although even here, Lincoln had to learn to "change," unlike certain other leaders who never learned "that the military methods of World Wars I and II would not work in Vietnam or Iraq."

Detail is even less important to McGovern than to White, since McGovern cannot get right the names of Anson Henry and James Cook Conkling, mistakes the Missouri Compromise for the Compromise of 1850, mistakes the governor of Virginia for the governor of South Carolina, puts Winfield Scott in command of the Army of the Potomac (which had not yet been created when Scott retired), imagines that Lincoln somehow could regulate "telegraph news through the War Department," and describes the 1862 congressional elections as costing the Republicans 45 seats in the House, then 22 seats. He cannot even quote Lincoln accurately: the famous lines Lincoln wrote in 1858—"As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy"—now become "So I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master."

Much worse than merely misquoting Lincoln is McGovern's penchant for pushing into Lincoln's mouth words he would never have dreamt of uttering. McGovern's Lincoln "believed in... the idea that fairness and justice must govern relations between government and citizens," and that "liberty was something that the government helped to provide." It is safe to say that Lincoln never thought that government had any responsibility for fairness whatsoever. "If any continue through life in the condition of the hired laborer," he said in 1859, it was their own fault, and not some defect in the "fairness" of the American system. "It is not the fault of the system, but because of either a dependent nature which prefers it, or improvidence, folly, or singular misfortune." His advice to those who failed in business was almost cheerfully indifferent: "To such, let it be said, 'Lay it not too much to heart.' Let them adopt the maxim, 'Better luck next time;' and then, by renewed exertion, make that better luck for themselves." Nor did he believe that liberty was the gift of government. "Our reliance is in the *love of liberty* which God has planted in our bosoms," Lincoln said in 1858, and the principal responsibility of government was to create a condition of affairs in which people could look out for themselves. "In all that the people can individually do as well for themselves, government ought not to interfere."

War President

Nothing connected to Lincoln and the Civil War would appear complete in 2009 without a word or two from James McPherson. The George Henry Davis 1886 Professor Emeritus in American History at Princeton, McPherson had written little about Lincoln until the Bicentennial. But he is widely-known for his basic Civil War textbook, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1989 and confounded all expectations (for a book published by a university press) by topping the *New York Times* bestseller list. And the Year of Lincoln provided him an opportunity to compensate for any previous inattention by publishing two Lincoln titles, one a short biography from Oxford University Press and the other a full-dress study of Lincoln as a war president, *Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief*.

The short biography—at 96 pages, only half as long as even the McGovern biography—does little more than recite the bare outline of Lincoln's life, but gracefully and without any untoward interpretive interference. Much more expansive is the project of *Tried by War*, which is to show that Lincoln, the only president "in American history whose entire administration was bounded by war," devoted more "time and energy than anything else" to management of war, and apart from the vexing problem of constitutional and civil liberties violations, did it surpassingly well.

Still, war management was an unlikely burden for a man like Lincoln. As a long-time Whig, Lincoln shared the party's bone-bred suspicion of soldiering as the next door to despotism, and it was not by accident that the worst insult the Whigs could hurl at the head of Andrew Jackson was "the Military Chieftain." Lincoln served as a soldier himself for only a few months as a member of the Illinois militia in 1832, and in an age when politicians regularly sought out state militia commissions as patronage rewards, Lincoln never seems to have solicited any. Even as president, Lincoln looked askance at his own generals, not necessarily because they were incompetent (which a number of them were), but because six decades of dominance of the executive branch by various Democratic presidents had turned the professional army into a Democratic political engine. "Antislavery men, being generally much akin to peace," he told John F. Seymour, brother of Horatio Seymour, New York's Democratic governor, in 1863, "had never interested themselves in military matters and in getting up companies, as Democrats had." Nevertheless, the outbreak of the Civil War a bare six weeks after his inauguration forced Lincoln, if not into becoming a professional "military chieftain," then into taking charge of the ones who were.

And they were, as McPherson makes all too plain, a sorry lot, although in many respects this was not their fault. The U.S. Army in 1861 numbered a little over 16,000 officers and men, in 19 regiments (at a time when the newly reorganized Prussian army numbered 470,000 regulars and 130,000 reservists), most of whom had never been deployed in larger formations than a company, and had never faced anything more demanding than occupation duties in the

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West. The Military Academy at West Point specialized in training engineers, not combat leaders, and there was no staff college—or even a regular general staff—to provide that training in logistics, transportation, map-making, or communications. The one major exception was George B. McClellan, who had made the closest studies of European military methods and devised the first comprehensive strategic plan for the war in August 1861. But McClellan's gifts, which would have made him an ideal chief of staff (on the order of Helmuth von Moltke), did not extend to the management of actual campaign operations; and what was worse, his political loyalties to the Democratic Party inclined him to pull his tactical punches rather than deliver a clear-cut victory for a Republican president.

This left Lincoln little choice but to initiate his own process of self-education in military affairs, which he approached much in the same way he had learned lawyering—by borrowing books from the Library of Congress and studying them. What he learned from this reading, however, is highly debatable. McPherson believes that, over time, Lincoln learned to become a successful and competent master of "all five functions" of a commander-in-chief—"policy, national strategy, military strategy, operations, and tactics"—and the generals who eventually won the war on the battlefield did so because they embraced Lincoln's "mandate" to concentrate on destroying the rebel field armies rather than conquering territory or cities. This is not a particularly surprising conclusion, nor is *Tried by War* a particularly surprising book—it is actually, for the most part, a fairly conventional narrative of the Union view of the Civil War, indistinguishable from the relevant chapters of *Battle Cry of Freedom*.

But what, actually, did Lincoln learn from his autodidactic pursuit of military science? The standard textbooks of the day were written under the spell of Napoleon Bonaparte, and they hewed to the belief that victory in war was the product of single, decisive battles in which one side, in one massive stroke, disabled the opposing army and compelled its political leadership to come to the peace table. This might have served Napoleon's purposes at Jena and Austerlitz. But by the 1850s, field armies had swollen to dimensions which ensured that single-stroke, "decisive" victories would be impossible. What would certainly cripple an enemy army, however, would be to shift the blow to the enemy's logistics—lines of supplies, depots, and manufacturing centers—since these newly-gargantuan armies had stomachs which no mere foraging on the countryside could any longer satisfy. McClellan, curiously, understood this, and so his initial plans for war-making were aimed at the Confederacy's logistical centers, rather than at its field armies. Hence McClellan's grand plan to side-step the rebel army in Virginia, shift his own Army of the Potomac by water to the James River peninsula, and hit the Confederate capital at Richmond through its back door.

But Lincoln, who already had ample reason to resent McClellan's unconcealed contempt for the president he called "the original gorilla," interpreted McClellan's strategy as politics, not warfare—as a desire to avoid a straight-up, knock-down confrontation with the rebels. When Robert E. Lee and the Confederate army turned the tables on McClellan and ripped out McClellan's own logistical wiring during the Seven Days' Battles, McClellan hastily retreated. This looked to Lincoln like cowardice, not prudence, and when Lincoln finally relieved him of command in November 1862, he was adamant that McClellan's successors stop fooling around with plans to take Richmond, and drive up the middle, overland, to slug it out with Robert E. Lee and the Confederate army. "Lee's Army," he told Joseph Hooker, "and not Richmond, is your true objective point."

But was it? Obediently, a succession of generals—Burnside, Hooker, Meade—struggled to follow Lincoln's directive, and ended up with nothing to show for it but indecisive collisions with the rebels. When Lincoln brought Ulysses S. Grant to take control in Virginia in 1864, Grant was handed the same mandate. But Grant enjoyed Lincoln's political confidence like no other of the generals, and after another resultless string of stalemates, from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor, Grant prevailed on Lincoln to let him try the McClellan strategy below the James River. The result was a siege of Richmond and Petersburg which drained the life out of Lee's army, and when Lee finally broke away and tried to make a run for it in April 1865, the rebel army, lacking a logistical base, stumbled and collapsed into Grant's arms. The same pattern held true elsewhere in the war—it was not the defeat of rebel armies at Perryville or Murfreesboro, but the capture of Chattanooga and Atlanta, which wrecked the Confederacy's war-making capacity. In retrospect, Lincoln's directive to make "Lee's army…your true objective" was almost the worst advice a commander-in-chief could have given in the 19th century. Which only goes to show that even a great man cannot be wise in everything. But we do not even catch a glimmer of this from *Tried By War*.

Revealing Glimpses

Harold Holzer, who began life as a public-relations man for Bella Abzug and then for Mario Cuomo, and who now serves as senior vice president for external affairs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, may seem as unlikely a Lincolnite as Lincoln seemed a commander-in-chief. What Holzer lacks in academic standing, however, is more than made-up for by his relentless energy in carving out a niche all to himself in Lincoln studies, first as a specialist in Lincoln iconography and then as the principal remembrancer of Lincoln's connections to Holzer's own New York City. Although he has contributed numerous essays and chapters to a variety of Lincoln-related books, Holzer's contribution to the Bicentennial, *Lincoln, President-Elect: Abraham Lincoln and the Great Secession Winter, 1860–1861*, is actually only his second full-length study of Lincoln (the first being *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Abraham Lincoln President* in 2004). But like the Cooper Union book, it is a tale rollickingly well-told, studded with curious details that enliven and humanize Lincoln's difficult progress from the day of his election in November 1860, to the moment he takes the presidential oath from Roger Taney on the steps of the Capitol four months later. Indeed, the focus may be a little too unrelentingly on Lincoln. There is comparatively little in Holzer's book about the larger political context of the "secession winter," which Russell McClintock meticulously lays out in *Lincoln and the Decision for War: The Northern Response to Secession*, a sadly unheralded book that appeared the same year as *Lincoln, President-Elect*.

Politics, however, rules the roost in *The Lincoln Anthology: Great Writers on His Life and Legacy from 1860 to Now*, which Holzer edited for the Library of America series. Conceived as a companion volume to LOA's two-volume *Lincoln: Speeches and Writings* (edited by Don E. Fehrenbacher in 1989) the *Anthology* is a collection of writings about Lincoln, from the odd (Artemus Ward, Bram Stoker) to the famous (Walt Whitman, Leo Tolstoy) to the incongruous (*both* Winston Churchills, the American novelist *and* the British prime minister). And for its first 700 pages, the *Anthology* as a whole has a certain Barnumesque celebrity-walk quality, since almost none of this material would be worth reading apart from its associations with Abraham Lincoln. Where this trajectory loses speed and begins to corkscrew is in the last part—in other words, writings on Lincoln from the 1970s onwards, where Holzer's leftward political tilt becomes risible. In rapid succession, the stage is seized from Jacques Barzun and H.L. Mencken, and turned over to W.E.B. DuBois, H.G. Wells, Robert Sherwood, Allen Ginsberg, Gore Vidal, Mario Cuomo, Garry Wills, Richard Slotkin (using an excerpt from Slotkin's inept shinplaster, *Abe: A Novel of the Young Lincoln*), E.L. Doctorow, and finally…Barack Obama.

Apart from William Safire, modern conservative writing on Lincoln is rigorously airbrushed out of existence—nothing from Harry

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Jaffa, nothing from M.E. Bradford, nothing from Jack Kemp, nothing from Willmore Kendall, nothing from Thomas Sowell, nothing even from Thomas DiLorenzo. (Not that I think them all equally admirable—but it seems an odd anthology of writing about Lincoln which so arbitrarily and triumphantly *excludes* them). Like *Our Lincoln* (to which Holzer contributed), *The Lincoln Anthology* reeks of Left imperialism, trying to lay hold of Lincoln in much the same spirit that a spoiled child lays claim to another child's toy.

Family Album

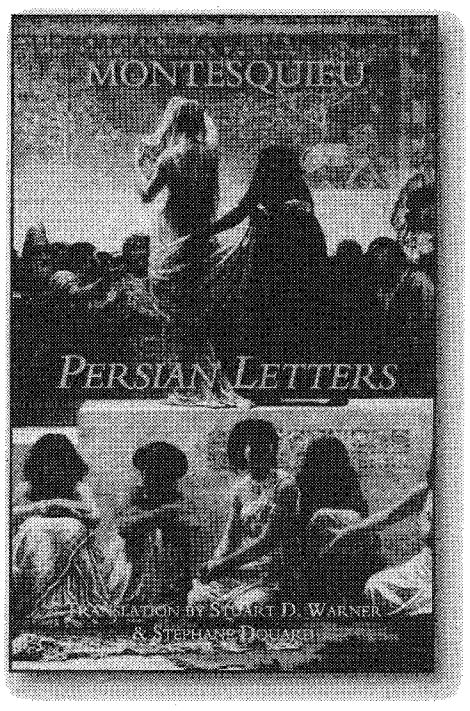
THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO BOOKS AMONG the Bicentennial Lincolns which aspire to do little more than harmlessly amuse and interest, and which are worth a quick look. One is *Looking for Lincoln: The Making of an American Icon*, from Philip and Peter Kunhardt, which is probably the closest thing to being a coffee-table book for the Bicentennial. The Kunhardt family has a long history of its own in Lincoln photography, stretching back to Philip and Peter Kunhardts' great-grandfather, Frederick Hill Meserve, who published the first Lincoln photograph collection, *The Photographs of Abraham Lincoln*, in 1911. Meserve's grandson, Philip Kunhardt, Jr., who would rise to become a managing editor of *Life*, published a number of rare Lincoln photographic discoveries in that magazine (including a memorable article on the final reburial of Lincoln's coffin, together with an interview of the last survivor of the reburial to have actually seen Lincoln's face). He also produced, in 1965, a remarkable photographic history of the Lincoln assassination and funeral, *Twenty Days*, and in 1992, a gorgeous picture book, *Lincoln*, which accompanied a PBS television series. *Looking for Lincoln*, coming from the fourth and fifth generations of Kunhardts, easily outdoes its predecessors, both in its sumptuously glossy reproductions and as an extension of the 1992 *Lincoln* into the post-1865 world of Lincoln remembrance. As such, the principal players (and images) of this volume are not Lincoln, but his family, his biographers, his associates, all the way to the death of Robert Todd Lincoln, the last of his immediate family, in 1926. (For those who expected to get more of Lincoln himself, a convenient "Gallery" offers an enumeration and thumbnail reproductions of all of the 114 currently known Lincoln photographs.)

If there is a fault to find with the Kunhardts' long retrospective, it is that it flattens a little too gently the weirdly-undulating landscape of the Lincoln family after the president's death. This accusation, however, can never be aimed at Charles Lachman, whose *The Last Lincolns* joins a rapidly sprouting sub-division of "Lincoln family" books in the past few years, which includes Stephen Berry's *House of Abraham*, Daniel Mark Epstein's *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*, Catharine Clinton's *Mrs. Lincoln: A Life*, and Jason Emerson's *The Madness of Mary Lincoln*. The story of Mary Todd Lincoln's slow spiraling into insanity after her husband's murder and the death of all but one of her children has been often told and endlessly debated, and Emerson's *Madness* does little more than confirm the reality of that derangement. Berry's *House of Abraham*, however, makes plain how many of Mary's siblings and step-siblings seem to have sunk into la-la land at some point, and Lachman completes the story of this harrowing descent by re-creating in agonizing detail just how very close the Lincoln family, between 1865 and the death of the last direct Lincoln descendent in 1985, came to becoming a model for the Addams Family.

The one family member who seemed to have a reasonably solid hold on reality was Lincoln's sole surviving son, Robert Todd Lincoln. Although William Herndon sneered that Robert was more of a Todd than a Lincoln, Robert was actually one of the few Lincolns who could reasonably be described as perfectly normal, and enjoyed an enormously successful career as a lawyer. Robert's older daughter Jessie, however, was a rebellious serial adulterer (she eloped with her first husband, a drifter named Warren Beckwith, in 1897; they divorced in 1907, after which she married Ned Johnson, who divorced her when he found her in bed with Robert Randolph, whom she married in 1926, all the while picking her parents' pockets for money). RTL's younger daughter, Mary (known as "Mamie" to keep all the Marys in the Lincoln clan apart), married Charles Isham, adding yet another lawyer to the family. But Mamie had only one weak, anemic son, and he lived the swank life of the New York speakeasies and never had children of his own. Jessie had produced two children from her first marriage, Peggy and Robert. Peggy turned out to be the oddest ball in the court, living in her father's mansion in Vermont, Hildene, like an eccentric beggar. She ultimately willed the place to the Christian Science Church upon her death in 1976. (The Christian Scientists wisely unloaded Hildene to a non-profit group which now operates it as a Lincoln museum.) Her brother, Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, also had a roving streak, which resulted in a paternity suit in 1976, which then resulted in divorce, and then in tests which finally proved that RTLB's supposed offspring could not have been his child, since Beckwith was, as it turned out, impotent.

Lachman could have ended matters there, and the whole story would have been rattlingly

Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*



This translation of Montesquieu's unsurpassed epistolary novel, the first to appear in over a generation, is completely new and aims at being as literal as possible, including pulling no punches with the erotic elements. This long-awaited translation will be the standard translation for years to come.

Persian Letters journeys across the unending landscape of things human, providing readers the opportunity to think through an astonishing number of themes – mastery and slavery, jealousy, philosophy and tyranny, self-deception, commerce, nature and convention, the best life for a human being, vanity, glory, and human sexuality. Given its fascination with the relationship between Islam and the West, and the power of religion in the world generally, the book is especially timely.

Translated by Stuart D. Warner and Stéphane Douard; 340 pages, clothbound, $28.00, ***June 2010***

"Jokes in a serious work are acceptable on the condition that they hide a profound sense beneath a trivial form. It is in this way that Montesquieu, in his novel, *Persian Letters*, has written one of the most philosophical books of the eighteenth century" – Alexis de Tocqueville

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strange on its own. And perhaps he should have, since he makes the mistake of inserting into the final chapter the absurd speculation that Jack Coffelt, a grifter who was adept at conning poor Beckwith, was the infamous D.B. Cooper, before Cooper made his famous jump into the Pacific Northwest in 1971. As it is, the miserable story of the Lincolns after Lincoln only recalls the weary comment of Charles Dickens, who was saddened to look around his dining table at his children, only to see not a one who had departed from the fecklessness of his own quite feckless father. If anyone wants fuel for arguing that Abraham Lincoln is strictly an artifact of the past, these two books will more than do the job, at least as far as genetics goes.

A Touchstone Biography

THE SCORE, THEN, ON BOOKS FOR THE Lincoln Bicentennial has not been an encouraging one. And this is odd, because the last 15 years have seen a renaissance of Lincoln scholarship, which has made them the golden age of Lincoln studies. A number of currents have combined to swell this flood, not the least of which has been the rebirth of the Abraham Lincoln Association in the 1980s, the stupendous editing accomplishments of the Lincoln Legal Papers project (under Cullom Davis and Daniel W. Stowell) and *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews & Statements about Abraham Lincoln* (edited by Douglas Wilson and Rod Davis in 1998), plus the creation of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, with the wise but hidden hand of Illinois state historian Thomas Schwartz at the wheel.

No single historian, however, has done more to roll these developments into one enormous Lincolnian package than Michael Burlingame, who is himself responsible for a small industry of editions of Lincoln-related memoirs and recollections (including the papers of John G. Nicolay, the diary of John Hay, and the newspaper correspondence of Noah Brooks). As a student of the late David Donald—the nation's premier Lincolnian until his death last May—Burlingame re-opened what seemed to have been the sealed tomb of Lincoln writing in 1994 with *The Inner World of Abraham Lincoln*. Until that moment, the most conventional of conventions about Lincoln books was that, after so many biographies and biographers over the years, nothing further could possibly be known about Lincoln, and so all new efforts at writing about him could be little more than wearing the ruts just a little deeper.

What occurred to Burlingame, however, was one of those basic—almost primitive—insights that make for the shifting of entire paradigms. Every biographer, he reasoned, works from notes. Most of the notes never manage to get into the biography for reasons of space, just as most of the 3x5 cards we amass for college term papers never get into the final submission. In our case, the excess 3x5s wind up in the waste basket; in the case of famous writers, they wind up in collections of authors' papers in various archives and libraries, where no one except the most diligent (or the most antiquarian) ever bother to call for them. Surely the same thing must hold true for biographers of Lincoln. The more famous (like the muckraking journalist Ida Tarbell), the more likely the unused material has survived; the closer they were to Lincoln's time (and Tarbell was really the last to interview people who had personally known Lincoln), the more likely that the unused material contained gems of direct information which no one had ever thought to look for. Tarbell being the easiest example, Burlingame tracked down Tarbell's papers to her alma mater, Allegheny College, and sure enough, what he found was a gold mine of interviews and correspondence from Tarbell's informants which had not made the final cut for Tarbell's *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (1903). This set Burlingame onto the track of every archive likely to contain similarly unused cast-offs, and the result, in *The Inner World of Abraham Lincoln*, was a series of essays, escorted by an armada of 200 footnotes each, which unearthed a Lincoln no one had seen in more than a century. In some cases, each chapter's footnotes were as long as the chapter, and just as interesting to read on their own terms.

That this would lead to the creation of a new, comprehensive biography of Lincoln, no one doubted. The only questions were, *how big would it be* and *how long would it take?* The last super-biography of Lincoln had been Carl Sandburg's curious, multi-volume *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years* and *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, which appeared between 1926 and 1939. But Sandburg's *Lincoln* was as much a poetic saga, glorifying the folksy Lincoln who "had walked out of a Chinese or Russian fairy story...with a handkerchief full of presents he wanted to divide among all the children in the world," as it was a biography, and it played to a far different audience. Burlingame's *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* was originally planned for six volumes (fearful publishers brought that down to two, and *sans* all but the most skeletal footnotes) and took a decade-and-a-half to finish. (Even so, Burlingame's *Lincoln* totals nearly 1,600 octavo pages of text, packaged in a slipcase at $125 a set, but they are worth every *centime*.) Unlike Sandburg, Burlingame has no interest whatsoever in fairy tale Lincolns. "Sandburg was a poet, I am a scholar," Burlingame writes in a prefatory note, and *laus deo* for that. And unlike the Pecksniffian chirping of Lin-

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Dr. Keith B. Payne is President of the National Institute for Public Policy and heads the Graduate Department of Defense and Strategic Studies at Missouri State University. He serves as a Commissioner on the Nuclear Posture Commission. Dr. Payne was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Forces Policy from 2002 to 2003.

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coln's Left-annexationists, Burlingame's Lincoln is self-consciously "a champion of freedom, democracy, and national unity...psychological maturity, moral clarity, and unimpeachable integrity." The Emancipation Proclamation is an unambiguous triumph for freedom, and its apparently desolate vocabulary was designed "to make sure that slaves liberated under the proclamation had a sound legal basis to protect their freedom in court, if necessary." And his death at the hands of John Wilkes Booth was a martyrdom for the cause of black civil rights fully as much as was Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination by James Earl Ray.

What is breathtaking is the depth of Burlingame's research—newspapers (the *Belleville Weekly Advocate*, not just the *New York Times*), collections of manuscripts ranging from the Beinecke Library at Yale to the "fragment of the manuscript" from Katherine Helm's *Mary, Wife of Lincoln* (1928) which he found in the William H. Townsend Papers at the University of Kentucky, and of course the Ida B. Tarbell Papers (not only at Allegheny, but at Smith College, too). If there is a comment, phrase, observation, reminiscence, or recollection concerning Abraham Lincoln which Burlingame has *not* exhumed, it can probably stay safely buried. This, at last, simplifies the dilemma of the Bicentennial Lincoln books: If you want to read for amusement, read Holzer's *Lincoln, President-Elect* or Lachman's *The Last Lincolns*. If you want to read for comprehension, read Burlingame, because from now and into the foreseeable future, Burlingame's is the touchstone biography everyone who aspires to the study of Lincoln must embrace, cite, read, and occasionally quarrel with.

The Statesman Lincoln

YES, QUARREL WITH—BECAUSE EVEN amid this refreshing Niagara of data, it is clear that the Lincoln who matters most to Burlingame is the psychological Lincoln, the Lincoln who rises up from mental loss and humiliation as a young man, who suffers what we would call "spousal abuse" at the hands of a near-maniac wife, and who bears the sorrows of a bleeding nation through four years of war without losing his balance or his resiliency. What is missing from Burlingame—in fact, what seems to have taken French leave from almost all the Lincoln Bicentennial books—is the political Lincoln. Not the politically-corrected Lincoln of Holzer's *Lincoln Anthology* or of Foner's *Our Lincoln*, but the political Lincoln as he himself knew and understood politics. "Politics were his Heaven," wrote Lincoln's third law partner, William Henry Herndon, and not just the politics of immediate issues and statutes, but the overarching politics of the American experiment itself. He could be "a trimmer" in politics, wrote Leonard Swett, who had known Lincoln since his days on the Illinois circuit and who carried out discreet personal embassies for Lincoln during the war years, "and such a trimmer the world has never seen.... Yet Lincoln never trimmed in principles—it was only in his conduct with men."

Those principles, from the beginning of his political career, were the Whigs'. "He was as stiff as a man could be in his Whig doctrines," recalled his second law partner, Stephen T. Logan, and these included the creation of a national banking system, protective tariffs for American manufacturing, government encouragement to business in the form of "internal improvement" projects, and a profound reluctance to meddle otherwise in the affairs of a free market. Shocking as this may sound to the apostles of redistribution, Lincoln frankly said in 1860, "I take it that it is best for all to leave each man free to acquire property as fast as he can.... I don't believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good." Nor was this merely an offhand genuflection to capitalist hegemony. Lincoln had read long and hard in the classical liberal texts of natural law and political economy—"[John Stuart] Mill's political economy, [Matthew] Carey's political economy, social science...[John Ramsey] McCullough's political economy, [Francis] Wayland, and some others," according to Herndon—and like the classical liberals of the Manchester School, what Lincoln wanted was to "allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everybody else." Then, he added, "you can better your condition, and so it may go on and on in one ceaseless round so long as man exists on the face of the earth!"

There is certainly plenty of greatness in Lincoln to go around, plenty in fact to allow whole books devoted to the depth of his character, his capacity for managing military affairs, his concepts of race and of emancipation. But at the end of the day, we will still lack the essential core of the man without his politics and the principles which animated them. Hofstadter's contempt for Lincoln was rooted in Hofstadter's distaste for Lincoln's politics; but he at least understood that the man and his ideas were inseparable. Hofstadter hoped that the ideas had become irrelevant, but he had no illusion that he could re-write or erase the politics and still have the man. This, however, is precisely why Hofstadter's Left-Progressive heirs, from Foner through McGovern, so often seem to be dealing in pasteboard Lincolns. If they took Lincoln as seriously as did Hofstadter, or even Helen Nicolay, they would have to be singing paeans to free markets, free speech, and free men, or else renounce him as a capitalist tool.

But at the other end of the spectrum, there are far too many conservatives who imagine that Lincoln's uncomplicated Manchester liberalism can be dropped into place without sufficient consideration of Hofstadter's (and Nicolay's) point that Lincoln "belonged to the age of craftsmanship rather than industrialism." A mid-sized factory in 1860 meant 15 employees and an owner (or partners) in shirt-sleeves; a major industrial establishment might employ 85. Corporations accounted for only 7% of all American manufacturing in 1860. By 1900, however, that share had swollen to 69%; between 1897 and 1905 alone, 5,300 small-scale firms were consolidated and reorganized into just 318 corporations, and 26 super-corporations controlled 80% of American industrial output. After the Civil War, "I found that I had got back to another world," said the title character of William Dean Howells's novel, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*. "The day of small things was past, and I don't suppose it will ever come again in this country."

In that light, the greatness of Abraham Lincoln will rest on how much genuine credit (and not just notional assent) we still give his politics as the embodiment of natural laws written onto the hard disk of human nature and transcending the immediate circumstances of his times; or whether we believe that our America has changed so much that Lincoln's ideas are simply no longer applicable to an interdependent, free-floating, immigrant swamped, mass consumption society. Without making that determination, the question will not be whether Lincoln is *our* Lincoln or *their* Lincoln, but whether he is anybody's Lincoln, any more.

Allen C. Guelzo is director of the Civil War Era Studies program at Gettysburg College, and the winner of the Lincoln Prize in 2000 for Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President *(Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Company) and in 2005 for* Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America *(Simon & Schuster).*

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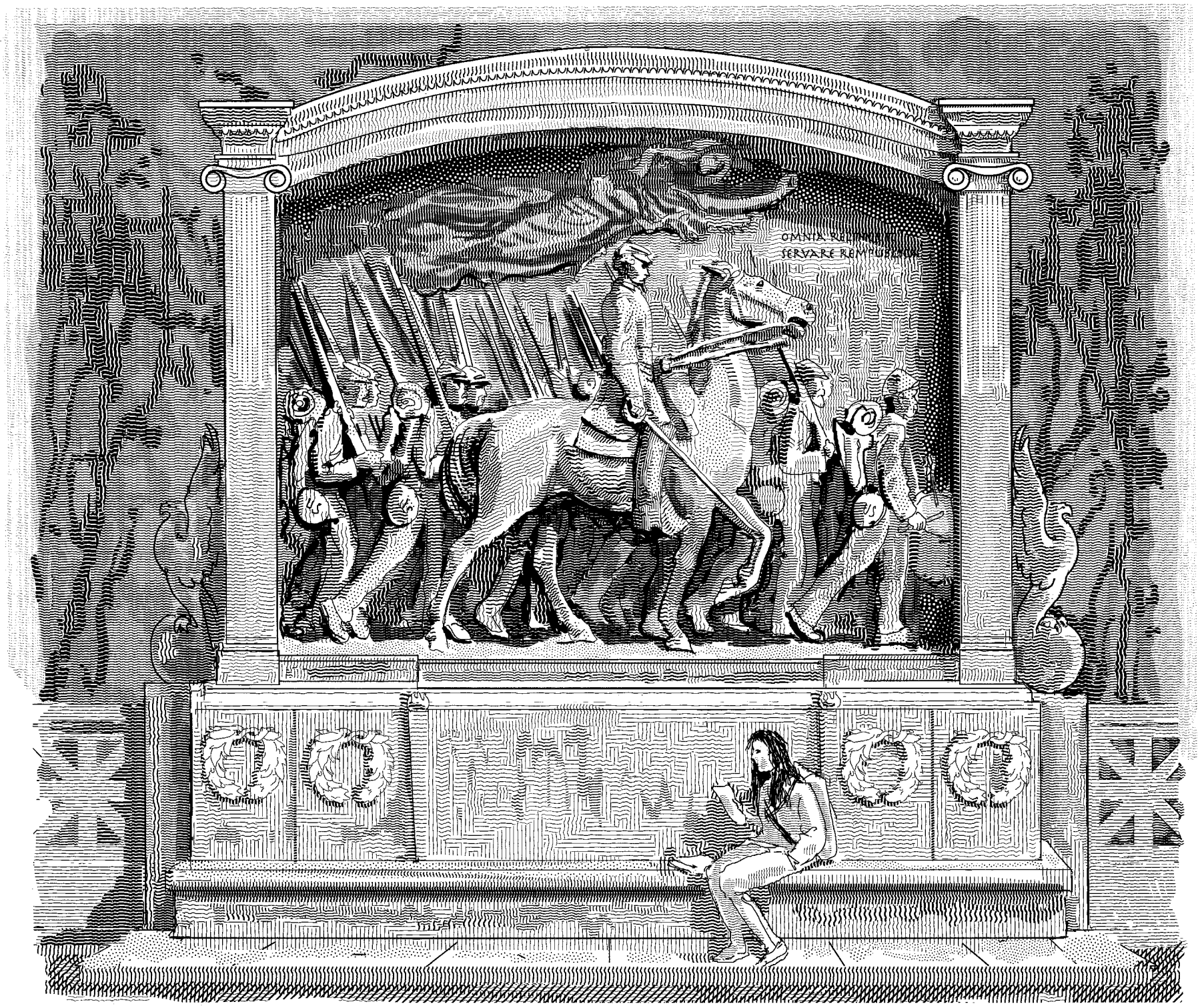
Essay by Allan Greenberg

The Last Full Measure of Devotion



The Shaw Memorial; Boston, MA

On a late spring day in 1897, a crowd estimated at 20,000 gathered on Beacon Street at the steps of the Massachusetts Statehouse to celebrate the unveiling of the first memorial dedicated to the defeat of slavery in the United States. The bronze relief by Augustus Saint-Gaudens commemorated the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry—the first regiment of free Northern black soldiers inducted into the Union Army—their white officers, and, in particular, their commander.

Colonel Robert Gould Shaw was just 25 years old when he assumed his command in 1863. He was aware that the Confederacy would probably sentence to death any captured white officers who commanded black troops. His soldiers also understood that if they were taken prisoner they would be executed or sold into slavery, even if they had been born free men. The son of a socially prominent family of committed abolitionists, Shaw wrote, "If the raising of colored troops proves such a benefit to the country and to the blacks…I shall thank God a thousand times that I was led to take my share in it."

On July 18, 1863, the soldiers of the 54th Regiment faced the ramparts of Fort Wagner, a massive Confederate earthwork that guarded the harbor at Charleston, South Carolina. Storming the fort on foot, Shaw and his men succeeded in gaining the parapet, but Shaw was killed trying to scale the walls. For unknown reasons, the Union army did not support their advance, and they were eventually driven out of the fort and off the walls. Almost half the soldiers were killed, wounded, or missing in action. Confederate Lieutenant Iredell Jones later recalled, "The Negroes fought gallantly, and were headed by as brave a colonel as ever lived."

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Corporal James Henry Gooding of the 54th described Shaw's death for the *New Bedford Mercury*: "We were exposed to a murderous fire.... Col. Shaw seized the staff when the standard bearer fell, and in less than a minute after, the Colonel fell himself.... He was [stripped of his clothes and] buried in a trench with 45 of his men! Not even the commonest respect paid to his rank." The Shaw family, however, considered this intended ignominy an honor, and spurned all efforts to recover their son's body. Knowing that no other officer in the Civil War had been treated in this manner, Shaw's father, Francis George Shaw, wrote, "Since learning of the place of our dear dead son's burial, we would not remove his body if we could. We can imagine no holier place than that in which he lies, among his brave and devoted followers, nor wish for him better company." Col. Shaw had left instructions that he was to be buried with his men, forgoing the officer's privilege of having his body shipped home.

Soon after the subsequent fall of Fort Wagner, on September 6, 1863, the men of the 54th Regiment raised funds toward a modest stone memorial to Shaw to be built nearby. Due to local hostility, the memorial was blocked and the money went instead to found the first free school for black children in Charleston. In 1865, Joshua Smith, a fugitive slave who had become a businessman in Boston, proposed a memorial to "commemorate the great event, wherein [Shaw] was a leader, by which the title of colored men as citizen-soldiers was fixed beyond recall." A committee was formed under Governor John Albion Andrew to commission an equestrian statue of Shaw.

The matter lapsed until 1882, when the architect H. H. Richardson, a friend of the Shaw family, presented sketches for a memorial to the Andrews committee and recommended that Augustus Saint-Gaudens, a young sculptor who had emigrated from Ireland to the United States as an infant, be awarded the commission. At the time, he was acclaimed for his remarkable statue in New York City of Admiral David Farragut.

Saint-Gaudens's first sketch simply showed Shaw astride a horse, but Shaw's family rejected it as inappropriate because their son had been an officer of the infantry who died leading a charge on foot. Heeding their criticism, the young sculptor decided to start over. Through discussions with Shaw's father, he attained a deeper understanding of the young colonel and the legacy of the 54th in legitimating the role of black soldiers in the military. Their conversations helped Saint-Gaudens identify the memorial's proper subject: Shaw on horseback riding next to his soldiers as they marched together to war. That was the basis of the sculptor's new maquette in April 1883, which was immediately accepted by the family.

Saint-Gaudens struggled for the next 13 years to give life to this vision. On the monument, Shaw is modeled in unusually high relief and rides alongside a group of 23 soldiers marching in ranks four deep. Every soldier's face is a distinct portrait; each figure is unique, with his own gait and posture, reinforced by variations in the position of legs, arms, packs, and rifles. Saint-Gaudens sculpted 40 portraits, from which he selected 16 for the memorial. Some of these soldiers had been slaves, men with no rights, classified as chattel. Shaw's father taught Saint-Gaudens that the recognition of each soldier's identity was central to understanding the reason his son rode to war. Saint-Gaudens's modeling was so successful that William James, who spoke at the monument's unveiling, felt he could hear the bronze figures breathe.

In the composition there is a vivid sense of the regiment's determined forward movement—a group of men heading directly into destiny. To achieve this, Saint-Gaudens imparted a slight forward inclination to the marching

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men so that one almost feels the throb of the drum and the cadence of their feet. Indeed, the impression of motion is so powerful that one can imagine the rest of the regiment on either side of the memorial.

The right-hand side of the bronze sculpture is inscribed with the words, "Omnia relinquit servare rempublicam," or, "He forsook all to serve the republic." The inscription refers both to Cincinnatus, who twice saved the Roman Republic from disaster and then, refusing all rewards, returned to his farm, and to George Washington, who likewise served without pay and returned to farming after the Revolutionary War. The motto links republican government and the American Revolution with the then unfinished business of abolition.

Despite its relatively small size—11 feet tall and 14 feet wide—the memorial has a monumental presence. The setting was designed by the architect Charles McKim of McKim, Mead & White, who also came from a family of committed abolitionists. In an unusual move, he framed the bonze relief with limestone pilasters and an exquisite arch. He placed the sculpture on a low masonry wall that forms a U-shaped terrace, set apart from its surroundings by a single step.

The memorial conveys a sense of weightlessness, of capturing a moment in time, as it draws part of its meaning from its historic setting facing the statehouse. This reminds observers of the American Revolution and Massachusetts's tradition of fighting for freedom—from the Boston Tea Party to the battle for Bunker Hill. A passerby's attention is initially drawn to the memorial because it is set back from the street and distinguished by its paved terrace and surrounding wall. Decorative urns enhance the wall at the two corners, and stately elm trees quietly bracket the composition.

The rear of the memorial stands on a retaining wall 12 feet above Boston Common. Seen from Beacon Street, the memorial seems to float against a backdrop of trees and distant buildings. The windows of the far-off buildings are so much smaller than the figures in the memorial that Shaw and his men appear larger than life. But the figures are actually sculpted somewhat smaller than life-size, so they seem at the same time vulnerable. This capacity to appear both larger and smaller than life imbues the memorial with a poignant vitality.

The soldiers in the relief are marching down Beacon Street, past Boston Common and the statehouse, just as they did when they left Boston for South Carolina. On May 31, 1897, as part of the ceremony dedicating the new memorial, veterans of the 54th, some white-haired and disabled, marched past it, but in the opposite direction as if returning home, remembering their lost comrades. Deeply moved, Saint-Gaudens wrote that "[t]he impression of those old soldiers, passing the very spot where they left for the war so many years before, thrills me even as I write these words."

THE ENDURING POWER OF THE SAINT-Gaudens sculpture resides in its acknowledgement of the common humanity of black and white Americans marching together, bearing arms together, and fighting and dying together. The Shaw family represented every family of every race who lost a son in the Civil War. By presenting a single vivid example of the union of the nation's black and white citizens, the memorial assumed a burden of national significance.

From the outset, the Shaw family considered it "simple justice" that the memorial include the names of the officers and men who fell at Fort Wagner and were buried with Col. Shaw. Unfortunately, the names of the black soldiers were not incorporated until 1982.

Beyond the élan of drumbeat and marching feet, the Shaw Memorial exudes sadness. Here are young Americans marching to war, to fight in defense of the Union and against slavery. A century later, in the midst of the nation's civil rights protests, the great poet Robert Lowell described the memorial as "a fishbone in the city's throat." It was a lone beacon reminding Boston and the rest of the nation of their failures to reconcile the cruel reality of life for black Americans with our noble belief that "all men are created equal." At the unveiling, William James voiced the same sentiment when he said that the black soldiers of the 54th personified "our American religion...the faith that a man requires no master" and that all Americans can "work out their salvation well enough together if left free to try." The presidency of Barack Obama, the grandson of a Kenyan cook, is a continuing reminder of just how prescient James was when he confronted his audience with these words, so central to our American political creed.

Allan Greenberg is an architect and the author of Architecture of Democracy *(Rizzoli). This essay is adapted from a forthcoming book on memorials,* Discourses in Stone *(Papadakis).*

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Essay by Algis Valiunas

Shall We Fight for King and Country?

Who are the supreme men and women of modern civilization, the human types most worthy of our esteem and aspiration? Twentieth-century England produced two famous, and contradictory, answers to that question, and how we choose between them will largely define our intellectual and moral life.

Winston Churchill was the public man par excellence, his native element the political arena, his animating desire to embody the British Empire at its best and, not incidentally, to join the most celebrated figures of history in the imperishable roll of honor. As he remarked with characteristic drollery, he would go down in history not least because he would write the history. He wrote a book about every war he took part in, from the wars of empire against savage tribesmen on the northwest frontier of India and in the Sudan, to the Boer War (where his daring escape from a prisoner-of-war compound made him a national hero and launched his political career), to the two world wars (in the first of which he served in the Cabinet and briefly in the trenches, and in the second as prime minister worthy of legend); besides these, he wrote biographies of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill, and his ancestor the nonpareil general John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, as well as a history of the English-speaking peoples. It is sometimes said that he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature only because there is no Nobel Prize for War, but in fact he did write the two finest histories of the 20th century, *The World Crisis* (1923–31) and *Marlborough: His Life and Times* (1933–38). When one numbers the greatest men of his time, he ranks at or near the very top; certainly no one approaches his dual accomplishment as intellectual and man of action.

To rival Churchill in eminence and influence required more than just one person; it took all of Bloomsbury, that glittering assemblage of intellectual and artistic talent which professed to save civilization from Churchill and his warlike kind. John Maynard Keynes, Virginia Woolf (née Stephen), Leonard Woolf, E.M. Forster, Lytton Strachey, Roger Fry, Clive Bell, and Vanessa Bell (Virginia Woolf's sister) were the heart of this coterie, which had its origin in the Cambridge Conversazione Society, the secret conclave of high-powered student brains better known as the Apostles that subsequently moved its base of operations to Bloomsbury, the London neighborhood around University College and the British Museum. If Churchill was for it—ardent patriotism, empire-building as moral duty and ordeal, the primacy of public life over private, war as an eternal feature of human existence—Bloomsbury was sure to be against it. Bold iconoclasts and antagonists, the Bloomsberries, as they called themselves with a giggle, promoted peaceable cosmopolitanism and the incomparable sweetness of the private life well lived, the worldly salvation to be found in art and love, comfort and abandon. In Lytton Strachey's words, "a great deal of a great many kinds of love" was the desired apex of civilized living.

Young Apostles

In the 1939 memoir "My Early Beliefs," John Maynard Keynes—perhaps the past century's most influential economist, and a writer of elegant clarity whom Saul Bellow called the foremost English prose stylist of his time—describes the impact of the Cambridge philosopher G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* (1903) on the young Apostles who sat at his feet.

> Nothing mattered except states of mind, our own and other people's of course, but chiefly our own. These states of mind were not associated with action or achievement or with consequences. They consisted in timeless, passionate states of contemplation and communion, largely unattached to "before" and "after." ...The appropriate subjects of passionate contemplation and communion were a beloved person, beauty and truth, and one's prime objects in life were love, the creation and enjoyment of aesthetic experience and the pursuit of knowledge. Of these love came a long way first.

Keynes and his friends turned Moore's philosophy into a religion—and one without morals. To have said so explicitly, however, would have offended their belief in the scientific ratio-

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nality of Moore's thinking and their own. What they thought about included such questions as whether the beloved person should be good-looking; they tended to agree, quite scientifically of course, that he or she should. Love was about as close as the young philosophers would come to action; they disdained "the life of action generally, power, politics, success, wealth, ambition, with the economic motive and the economic criterion less prominent in our philosophy than with St. Francis of Assisi, who at least made collections for the birds...."

Although the middle-aged Keynes says he has essentially continued to live by this youthful immoralist's religion, he acknowledges where it went wrong.

> We were not aware that civilization was a thin and precarious crust erected by the personality and the will of a very few, and only maintained by rules and conventions skillfully put across and guilefully preserved. We had no respect for traditional wisdom and the restraints of custom.

Thinkers as disparate as D.H. Lawrence and Ludwig Wittgenstein pilloried the self-regarding embryonic Bloomsberries for their lack of reverence. Keynes admits that in their "unreal rationality," he and Moore's other devotees "completely misunderstood human nature, including our own." Nineteen-fourteen showed Keynes the black unreason that could sink pure intellect in an instant, and also made him appreciate as worthy objects of contemplation and communion "the order and pattern of life amongst communities and the emotions which they can inspire." Keynes was the pre-eminent public man Bloomsbury produced, and his putting on government harness—he worked in the Treasury during the Great War—displeased some of his comrades immensely. But as he says in his memoir, the youthful intoxication of art and love would pervade his entire life.

E.M. Forster, who was a King's College, Cambridge, undergraduate a couple years ahead of Keynes, and who became the leading English novelist of his generation, never outgrew his youthful contempt for the public life and the sort of men who cannot do without it. In the 1939 essay "What I Believe"—celebrated or notorious, depending on whom you ask—he trumpets his distaste for "Great Men." "They produce a desert of uniformity around them and often a pool of blood too, and I always feel a little man's pleasure when they come a cropper." One admirable feature of democracy is that it does not produce Great Men but turns out instead "different kinds of small men—a much finer achievement." Forster manages two cheers for democracy, which makes for human variety and allows political criticism. Three cheers would be too many: "Only Love the Beloved Republic deserves that." In the name of love, or Love, Forster declares himself willing to disown his democratic homeland. "I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend I hope I should have the guts to betray my country." Forster seems oblivious that the private life, the endless pursuit of aesthetic, libidinal, and other pleasures, is in fact Bloomsbury's consuming cause—as doctrinaire and intense as any Great Man's politics—which his pungent musing most infamously certifies. He also fails to see, on the eve of the Second World War, that betraying his country to, say, Hitler's Germany would render his most exalted Love defunct: to the Nazis, homosexuals like Forster were degenerates fit only for disposal. To elevate private contentment above public duty as Forster does is most assuredly to ruin both.

The most artful, and in some respects the most typical, meditation that Bloomsbury produced on the private and the public life is Lytton Strachey's biography *Queen Victoria* (1921). Strachey brilliantly undermines the traditional biography of the famous political figure, usually a multi-volume affair devoted to high public accomplishments, as he writes instead an ironic but poignant account of a woman's need for love; in public adulation Victoria regains the happiness that she believed only the love of her Consort, Prince Albert, who died tragically young, could give her. Little did she realize it, but Queen Victoria subscribed implicitly to the Bloomsbury ethic, and demonstrated that the motives driving political life are but the displaced or unsatisfied passions of the private life. At least that is what Strachey would have one believe.

Churchill would have considered such a thought to be a blot on the dignity of public men and women. It comes as some surprise, then, to read in *Lord Randolph Churchill*, Winston Churchill's 1906 biography of his father, for a time one of the leading lights of the late-Victorian Conservative Party, that in his young manhood Lord Randolph shied away from the Parliamentary role everyone around him assumed he would pursue. "Peace and quiet, sport and friends, agricultural interests—above all a home—offered a woodland path far more alluring than the dusty road to London." The home he wanted to make was with the captivating American heiress Jennie Jerome, and it was the prospect of pleasing her by success in politics that propelled him into a political career. As he wrote her in a letter during their courtship, he preferred to spend his time reading Gibbon and Horace, but if she wanted him to become an M.P. he would launch himself in that direction. He would soon be complaining to her about the grubby labor of winning over voters—"the number of unwashed hands I have cordially shaken, you would not believe"—and the satisfaction of securing election seemed less important than that of securing her hand in marriage. At which point, love begins to fade from the scene—theirs was a miserable wreck of a marriage, haunted by the syphilis that would kill him at 45 and that his son did not dare mention in his life story—and politics sets Lord Randolph ablaze.

Politics may be an unlovely business in many respects, but to Churchill's mind it is the most significant vocation a man can have, and its detractors cut themselves off from life's vital force.

> The noise and confusion of election crowds, the cant of phrase and formula, the burrowings of rival Caucuses, fill with weariness, and even terror, persons of exquisite sensibility. It is easy for those who take no part in the public duties of citizenship under a democratic dispensation to sniff disdainfully at the methods of modern politics and to console themselves for a lack of influence upon the course of events by the indulgence of a fastidious refinement and a meticulous consistency. But it is a poor part to play.

Not all the Bloomsberries shunned the active life. Keynes was of course a notable exception, and so was Leonard Woolf. Upon going down from Cambridge, Woolf became a civil servant, doing his part for empire in Ceylon. In the second volume of his autobiography *Growing*, written in 1961 when he was 81, Woolf remembers being an utter political innocent along with his Cambridge friends, unaware of the chauvinistic and oppressive aspects of the imperial rule for which he signed on. He entered the political life without any real idea of what politics entailed; when he returned to England and left the civil service to marry Virginia Stephen six years later, having served honorably and risen in the ranks to assistant government agent, responsible for administering an immense territory, Woolf was disabused of any romantic notions of the imperial enterprise. The ruling English do not belong in Ceylon, or anywhere else but England, he concluded. Empire is simply wrong.

Heroism and Empire

Churchill on the other hand emphasizes the moral heroism of empire, which brings nothing less than salvation to men who have never known the blessings of modernity. To bestow upon the primitive and ignorant the products of civilized intelligence is the richest gift one people can give another. That is not to say Churchill

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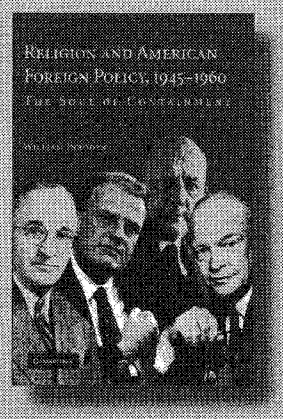

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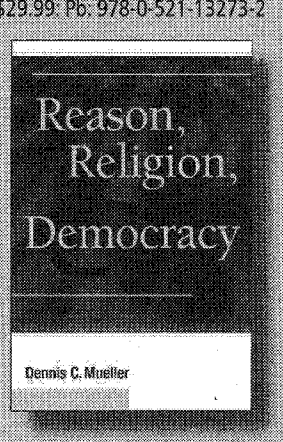

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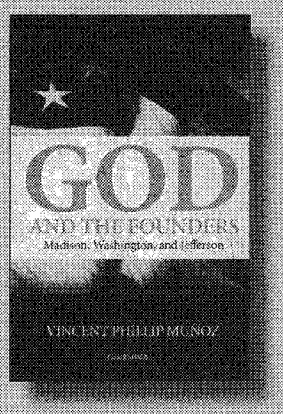

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was blind to the ugliness of imperial conquest and exploitation. Even in his young manhood, when he was something of a martial peacock, Churchill saw clearly enough the corrupt underside of empire; in *The River War* (1899), his telling of the British defeat of the vicious Dervish Empire in the Sudan, where he rode with the 21st Lancers at the Battle of Omdurman, he indicts "the greedy trader, the inopportune missionary, the ambitious soldier, and the lying speculator, who disquiet the minds of the conquered and excite the sordid appetites of the conquerors." All the same, for Churchill the impulse to bring the empire of reason to the benighted forgives every British moral failing. As he writes in *The River War,*

> What enterprise that an enlightened community may attempt is more noble and more profitable than the reclamation from barbarism of fertile regions and large populations? To give peace to warring tribes, to administer justice where all was violence, to strike the chains off the slave, to draw the richness from the soil, to plant the earliest seeds of commerce and learning, to increase in whole peoples their capacities for pleasure and diminish their chances of pain—what more beautiful ideal or more valuable reward can inspire human effort?

This encomium to the civilizing work implicitly praises precisely the sort of man whom Assistant Government Agent Woolf exemplified.

British intelligence and British character equip the imperial soldiery to conquer peoples lacking those qualities, and to do so for their own good. Once the natives are vanquished in war, they are vouchsafed the healing benefits of peace. Education in the rudiments of modernity prepares endemically indolent populations to share in the world's work and the world's bounty. Freedom from tyranny, freedom from superstition, freedom from want are the gifts that the British offer their new subjects. Churchill was the most eloquent spokesman for the empire of justice and prosperity.

There was of course no question that Britain had to relinquish its imperial holdings when it did, but the question that does remain is whether these former colonies are better off as free and independent nations. The perpetual plunder, squalor, and upheaval in the post-colonial world seem to give credence to the need for the civilizing mission as Churchill saw it; on the other hand, that mission appears to have been largely a failure, except insofar as it equipped still barbaric peoples with the latest means of destruction. Empire, in the time allowed it, could not triumph over human nature.

The Great War

Bloomsbury, however, believed that humanity in the imperialist nations of Europe could change, impelled by horror at the slaughter of the Great War of 1914-1918. In the 1918 essay "Militarism and Theology," Lytton Strachey laments that even moderate men these days accept human aggression as part of the world's fixed order and praise the warlike virtues as eternal goods. Reading *Deductions from the World War* by the German Lieutenant-General Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven makes Strachey despair, at least for the moment: "Militarism is an axiom taken for granted by every word in his book—and taken for granted so completely that it is hardly even discussed; it is simply, everywhere, and always implied. And this, surely, is a terrible phenomenon." Yet Strachey holds out a golden hope. The "theological frenzies" that had convulsed mankind for centuries came to an end with "the age of toleration": within a generation Bishop Bossuet's belief in "the transcendent import of religion in history and politics, and the necessity of religious persecution and religious war," had given way to the rational decency of Hume and Montesquieu. This radical transformation came upon the world all of a sudden, and Strachey argues that another such transformation may be in the offing:

> In spite of all the Baron may say, human nature does change, and it changes sometimes with remarkable rapidity. To moderate men like him, it may well be that militarism and the implications of militarism—the struggles and ambitions of opposing States, the desire for national power, the terror of national ruin, the armed organization of humanity—that all this seems inevitable with the inevitability of a part of the world's very structure; and yet it may well be, too, that they are wrong, that it is not so, that it is the "fabric of a vision" which will melt suddenly and be seen no more.

The immemorial reasons for which young men have suffered mutilation and death are patently unreasonable, not to say insane, in Strachey's view. Sensible people know better, and with luck shall bring a new world order into being, of internationalist institutions that would assure global peace. The hecatombs of the war deserved corrosive mockery. When conscription came into effect in 1916, Strachey applied for conscientious objector status, saying he did not oppose all wars but did oppose this one in particular. The political arrangements that hurled civilized European nations at each oth-

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er's throats were evil, and he was not about to offer his own throat for the knife. Asked by a member of the review committee what he would do if a German soldier tried to rape his sister, the homosexual Strachey replied, "I should try to come between them." Strachey's petition was denied, but he flunked his physical and stayed out of the war in any case.

John Maynard Keynes on the other hand dedicated himself to the Allied cause, though he did not fight in the trenches but rather worked in a Treasury office; even so, he would denounce himself and his country before the war was through, saying, "I work for a government I despise for ends I think criminal." Keynes wrote two reviews of Churchill's history of the Great War, *The World Crisis*, as it appeared in the late 1920s, and the reviews reflect Keynes's disenchantment. Churchill cannot conceal his own excitement, Keynes writes, at taking part in strategic decision-making—he served as First Lord of the Admiralty from 1911 to 1915—yet he suffers with the soldiers and sailors who enact the decrees of the military and political magnificos. Keynes cannot escape the impression that Churchill has written

> a tractate against war more effective than the work of a pacifist could be, a demonstration from one who loves the game, not only of the imbecility of its aims and its methods, but, more than this, that the imbecility is not an accidental quality of the particular players, but is inherent in its spirit and its rules.

But Keynes backs away from this assertion that would place Churchill on the side of Bloomsbury, and in his review of *The Aftermath* (1929), the volume of the history concerned with the subsequent peace, Keynes says that besides gratitude and admiration for Churchill he feels

> A little envy, perhaps, for his undoubting conviction that frontiers, races, patriotisms, even wars if need be, are ultimate verities for mankind, which lends for him a kind of dignity and even nobility to events, which for others are only a nightmare interlude, something to be permanently avoided.

For Churchill, then, the life of men in nations, each country competing for its fair share and more of the world's goods—a competition that sometimes erupts into slaughterhouse madness—is and will continue to be the natural human arrangement. Keynes and his Bloomsbury friends believe more rational arrangements can be made. Keynes was the Principal Representative of the British Treasury at the Versailles Conference in 1919, and in his exasperation at the "Carthaginian Peace" it produced, with its back-breaking burdens on Germany, he wrote *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, pointing out where "political considerations cut disastrously across economic"—that is, where inflamed nationalist passions prevented sound policy for the common welfare. Churchill replied in *The World Crisis* that Keynes's strictly economic understanding left out the need to satisfy those inflamed passions, which were only natural after a war that had left ten million dead. To ignore those violent emotions was to take an all too cerebral and therefore hopelessly incomplete view of human nature. "The story of Mankind is War," Churchill writes, and men sadly cannot leave off being warlike when they make peace. Justice has an element of revenge, and pure mercy toward a vanquished aggressor is more than one can, or should, hope for.

Other Bloomsbury writers were loath to concede the slightest virtue on Churchill's part. Lytton Strachey tossed off a little ditty mocking the disastrous 1915 Dardanelles campaign against Turkey for which most everyone blamed Churchill.

> Though Time from History's pages much may blot,
> Some things there are can never be forgot;
> And in Gallipoli's delicious name,
> Wxxxxxx, your own shall find eternal fame.

In 1922, as Britain was considering military action against Turkey once again, E.M. Forster wrote the dialogue "Our Graves in Gallipoli," in which two dead soldiers discuss the British cult of honor as embodied by "lion-hearted Churchill":

> Churchill planned this expedition to Gallipoli, where I was killed. He planned the expedition to Antwerp, where my brother was killed. Then he said that Labour is not fit to govern. Rolling his eyes for fresh worlds, he saw Egypt, and fearing that peace might be established there, he intervened and prevented it. Whatever he undertakes is a success. He is Churchill the Fortunate, ever in office, and clouds of dead heroes attend him. Nothing for schools, nothing for houses, nothing for the life of the body, nothing for the spirit. England cannot spare a penny for anything except for her heroes' graves.

In his biography of the novelist, P.N. Furbank writes that Forster hated Churchill more than any other politician. That hatred gets the better of Forster here.

In *The World Crisis*, Churchill mounts an able defense of his strategic plan for the Darda-

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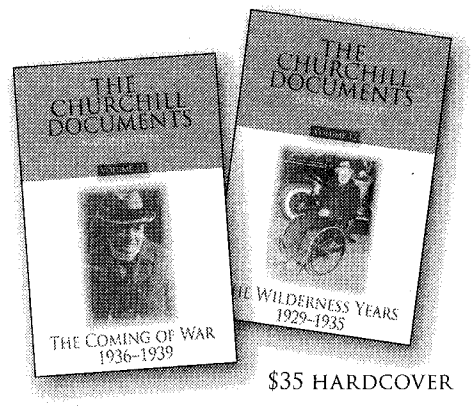

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nelles campaign: his sound conception was fatally compromised by the generals who believed the war was to be won by the last man standing on the Western Front, and who saw to it that the initial assault on Gallipoli was hopelessly short-handed. The piercing irony is that, had the original attack employed as many troops as the course of events ultimately required for reinforcements (who were largely sacrificed), the sheer strength of numbers would have pretty well assured success. The fiasco cost Churchill his position as first lord of the admiralty, but two years later a Dardanelles Commission of Enquiry exonerated him of wrongful action. Following Bloomsbury's lead, Churchill-haters continue to cry "Gallipoli" as evidence of his hell-bent recklessness and indifference to slaughter, but the charge is unjust. The killing imprudence was not his, and he calls the debacle hard instruction in "the profound significance of human choice and the sublime responsibility of men." Whatever Keynes in a certain mood may say to the contrary, Churchill does not find war imbecilic in itself: he always distinguishes between prudence and imprudence on the part of individual actors. It is reason, even more than courage, that gives the military vocation its dignity and luster, and Churchill understands reason more fully than Bloomsbury ever did.

Saving Civilization

That did not stop Bloomsbury from trying to paint Churchill as the epitome of murderous subterranean unreason. Virginia Woolf's polemic *Three Guineas* (1938) addresses the question of how we are to prevent war; she is concerned not with bringing down Hitler, but with eradicating the "competition and jealousy" that infect every aspect of civilized behavior and that inevitably drive men to kill each other—the "whole iniquity of dictatorship, whether in Oxford or Cambridge, in Whitehall or Downing Street, against Jews or against women, in England, or in Germany, in Italy or in Spain." With the leadership of naturally cosmopolitan women, free of "false loyalties" to king and country, truly civilized persons can change human nature. To despair of changing human nature is to ensure the perpetuation of evil in the name of sanctified phantoms. Who better than Churchill to represent the dead hand of immemorial tradition? Woolf quotes from an essay of his in *Thoughts and Adventures* (1932):

> "The brain of a modern man does not differ in essentials from that of the human beings who fought and loved here millions of years ago. The nature of man has remained hitherto practically unchanged. Under sufficient stress—starvation, terror, war-like passion, or even cold intellectual frenzy—the modern man we know so well will do the most terrible deeds, and his modern woman will back him up."

But, according to Woolf, it is not merely savage reflexes under duress that make modern men warlike; it is the preposterous honor shown the military, political, and other esteemed masculine professions. Of the ceremonial dress worn by men of high distinction in their public roles, Woolf writes with an anthropologist's wonder, as though she were describing the ritual adornments of Trobriand Islanders:

> Now you dress in violet; a jewelled crucifix swings on your breast; now your shoulders are covered with lace; now furred with ermine; now slung with many linked chains set with precious stones. Now you wear wigs on your heads; rows of graduated curls descend to your necks. Now your hats are boat-shaped, or cocked; now they mount in cones of black fur; now they are made of brass and scuttle-shaped; now plumes of red, now of blue hair surmount them.

In the 1922 memoir "Old Bloomsbury," collected in *Moments of Being*, she recalls a party hosted by Lady Ottoline Morrell, where she came upon a prime specimen of howling manhood in full regalia: "Winston Churchill, very rubicund, all gold lace and medals, on his way to Buckingham Palace." Virginia Woolf is out to bring down the entire structure of the vicious outdated patriarchy, and she begins by toppling the monumental statues that decorate the façade. True civilization must have new models. The lion-hearted Churchill has got to go.

At the time Virginia Woolf was contemplating the transfiguration of humanity along more womanly lines, Churchill was engaged in the comparatively mundane task of trying to stop Nazi Germany. And as part of this effort, he was finishing his portrait of the complete man, the paragon of civilization, Marlborough (1650–1722), the general who never lost a battle, the man unsurpassed in war who cherished the blessings of peace—devout in his Protestant faith, his loyalty to his queen, his love for his wife through nearly 50 years of marriage. The carnage of the Great War had kicked the willingness to fight out of the democratic nations, and Churchill wrote *Marlborough* in large part to revive the ideal of manhood ready for war when war is unavoidable: Marlborough effectively led the European Allies against the all but invincible predatory might of Louis XIV's France, which was bent on conquest "not only military and economic, but religious, moral, and intellectual."

In Winston Churchill's time even more than in Marlborough's, the preservation of English liberty meant the defense of civilization. To be civilized as Bloomsbury understood the word was to be hopelessly incomplete, unable to withstand the demands of war to the death with an evil enemy. Churchill, the man proud of his gold lace and medals, of having braved death in several wars, of having understood human nature to its savage depths, proved the indispensable man when the very survival of civilization was on the line. Today the contrast between Churchill and Bloomsbury is once again a vital matter, as our weakened civilization—weakened in no small part by our turn toward Bloomsbury values—faces an implacable and uncivilized enemy. Whether our civilization will prevail depends largely on whose understanding of civilization we choose to guide us.

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LOCUS CLASSICUS
by Larry P. Arnn

A Little Light Reading and Some Cataclysm

THE *CRB*'S LOCUS CLASSICUS SECTION, they tell me, is for old books, worthy and aged, and deserving of a second look. This book is in some ways an odd choice for that category. *Thoughts and Adventures* is a book of essays written by a politician, mostly about the events of his day, with the purpose of making money. We today know very well how dreary a thing like that can be.

The author wrote other books better suited for Locus Classicus, at least on the surface. The mood of *Thoughts and Adventures* is in so many places different from that of, for example, Churchill's awesome *The World Crisis*, his history of the First World War. Churchill himself suffered from that cataclysm in spirit, in reputation, and in political prospect. He writes *The World Crisis* to explain the tragedy and to repair the blow it brought to his own fortunes. From these motives he produces a movement in six volumes, beautiful and terrible, the cadence of doom relieved by the melody of hope. It is a modern rival to Thucydides, grander and brought to completion. Now *that* is a work for Locus Classicus.

By contrast this book is often playful and sometimes prosaic. It contains tales of plane crashes, and though they do have a body count, the hero survives and his risks are downplayed. There is a story about cartoons. There is a guide to amateur painting. There is a how-to section on hobbies that sets off like an article from the *Home Journal* ("many remedies are suggested for the avoidance of worry and mental overstrain"). There is a spy story that comes to nothing and a terror incident hardly qualifying as a portent of the horrors we see today.

These disqualifications of the book to classic status are worth mentioning because they exist and may indeed disqualify it. Also they are worth mentioning because, seen rightly, they are among the qualifications of the book. One must think of them in comparison to its graver parts. One must think how they might go together with the gravity of the book to make a whole.

Thoughts and Adventures,
by Winston S. Churchill,
edited by James W. Muller.
ISI Books, 380 pages, $22 (paper)

Scientific War

CONSIDER AS AN EXAMPLE THE ESSAY "Shall We All Commit Suicide?" It is a different kind of thing than we associate with the name of Winston Churchill, the man who faced all the destruction that Hitler could wreak while flashing a "V" sign with his fingers and speaking of blood and tears. "Shall We All Commit Suicide?" raises a logical problem. Churchill had observed this problem on battlefields for more than a quarter of a century, and he thought it a menace to the life of the West. Science, he observed, had produced a technical ability to kill beyond any previous experience. It had placed this ability in the hands of men whose propensity to kill was, though relieved by mercy and justice in many, incorrigible in others. How much damage might they do? In one of the most severe passages he ever wrote, Churchill states the danger:

> Mankind has never been in this position before. Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, it has got into its hands for the first time the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination.... Death stands at attention, obedient, Expectant, ready to serve, ready to shear away the peoples en masse; ready, if called on, to pulverize, without hope of repair, what is left of civilization. He awaits only the word of command. He awaits it from a frail, bewildered being, long his victim, now—for one occasion only—his Master.

Nor is this the sum of the danger. Man, this "frail, bewildered being," has long been given to corruption and violence, but now he may become worse. Scientific war has a way, Churchill thinks, of loosening the connection between power and the virtues by which it is rightly directed. Hitherto primacy in war required courage above all, and courage is one of the moral virtues, itself (so far as it goes) a qualification to rule. Where courage is found, justice and self-restraint may be nearby. The building blocks of power in former times conduced to moderation in its use. Not so much, Churchill feared, when the building blocks of power were to be found in technical competence alone. After all, that competence comes in part from a turning away from these very virtues.

Modern society is also different in structure and organization from older societies in ways that make it capable of great energy. People are better organized than ever. Principles exist that can command the loyalty of millions, that can give those same millions a stake in the society, a motive to obey the law and to contribute to the general prosperity by contributing to their own. Unimagined blessings for the common man have

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become available in the modern world. But these blessings make modern societies, to the same extent and for the same reason, capable of exertions in war that were previously unimagined. What they can do for man, they can also do *to* man.

Churchill's proposal for solving this problem is not so clear in this essay, nor is it explicit anywhere in *Thoughts and Adventures*—though he makes plain that suicide is the problem and not the solution! At the end of "Shall We All Commit Suicide?" he suggests that the League of Nations might supply hope. But he writes this without quite the strength or confidence that he achieves in warning of the danger. And anyway, he is not finished describing the danger. More and worse is to come in the essay that follows.

Interventions of Chance

"Mass effects in modern life" is a partner, one might say a domestic partner, to the international danger described by "Shall We All Commit Suicide?" The technical approach to war can be employed at home, too.

In an interesting beginning to this essay, Churchill raises the question whether "the march of events" is "ordered and guided by eminent men," and whether "human progress" is the "result of the resolve and deeds of individuals" or "only the outcome of time and circumstance." The question, he says, "has only to be posed to be answered." But the answer is not confined only to the "resolve and deeds" of individuals. The answer concerns also mere accidents, things that are not resolved by anyone.

If, Churchill writes, we look at "the story of nations" or of "our own small lives," we see the decisive part played by accident. "If that horse had not stumbled, if we had not met that woman, or missed or caught that train, the whole course of our lives would have been changed" And if this is true, what then of the "deflection which the Master Teachers—Thinkers, Discoverers, Commanders—have imparted at every stage"?

These eminent people are forces in their own right, causes separate from nature or from the usual way of things. All of us have this agency, but these are special people, and they have special effects. (This is a theme important to Churchill, who regarded himself as special, remarking "we are all worms, but I do believe I am a glow-worm.") Yet in the same breath as he describes these mighty beings as the shapers of history, he describes their activity as somehow parallel to chance. The interventions of such remarkable people are like the interventions of chance. Somehow the room available in nature for something other than nature to make things happen is a shared space.

This too is an old theme for Churchill. In a beautiful passage in *The World Crisis* he explains both the method of the book and the reason for it. He will, he writes, isolate and describe "the chain of commanding causation," along which "even the smallest events are vital." He continues:

> It is these which should be studied and pondered over; for in them is revealed the profound significance of human choice and the sublime responsibility of men. No one can tell that he may not someday set a stone rolling or take or neglect some ordinary step which in its consequences will alter the history of the world.

"The sublime responsibility of men" is demonstrated, somehow, in the fact that we can alter the history of the world by a mere inadvertence. This proves, Churchill thinks, that the deeds of each of us are important. It places upon us a burden to choose well, which means to choose deliberately. In war, he wrote once to Lord Halifax, we who govern must live as the troops live, in a condition of "stress of soul." To sustain this stress, one learns in *Thoughts and Adventures*, we require relief; we require, for example, hobbies. The human soul has a magic property. It can wear down from overuse like the elbows of an old coat; but unlike the coat it can restore itself, not so much by rest as by the use of some other part of the soul. In two different essays about actual war service, Churchill gives examples of how even the soldiers in the trenches require this relief and can have it, if their commanders know enough to assist them.

Intructions for Living

The essay on "hobbies," and also the essay "Painting as a Pastime," are not then dissociated from the more serious essays in the book. They give an instruction for living, especially for living the life of stress imposed by the necessity of deliberating upon a high plane. If each stone that we may set rolling can alter the history of the world, we must take care of ourselves so as to do our best work. The world of hobbies, including painting, is an alternative to the world of utility, in which even the energy to be found in "the last dying kick" (as Churchill notes in *The Gathering Storm*) is deployed by the state for its purposes.

This deployment of the individual's last dying kick for the purposes of the state is the specific danger of modern life. "Powerful changes," Churchill writes in "Mass Effects," may be coming to pass that are hostile to the individual control of human affairs. Now the thinking man—with his high reflections and his time for repose when at leisure, with the stress of his soul when occupied—is replaced by mass conceptions. As on the battlefield, so at home, there is a process for everything, and everything is reduced to a process.

The model for the mass society is to be found in Russia, where the Bolsheviks have carried "mass conceptions to their utmost extreme." There will be universal standardization. This means of course that chance will be eliminated. The "individual becomes a function." "No one is to think of himself even as that harmonious integrity of mind, soul and body, which, take it as you will, may claim to be the 'Lord of Creation.'" The elimination of chance involves the elimination of the individual. C.S. Lewis, a contemporary of Churchill, describes this phenomenon in similar terms under the title *The Abolition of Man*. The Bolsheviks do not, Churchill continues, build a society like a beehive, for there is no queen and no honey. Rather they have built the society of the White Ant.

He relieves this bleak picture in a wonderful reversal, one of the finest things he ever wrote about the subject of management, or perhaps governance is a better term.

> But human nature is more intractable than ant-nature. The explosive variations of its phenomena disturb the smooth working out of the laws and forces which have subjugated the White Ant. It is at once the safeguard and the glory of mankind that they are easy to lead and hard to drive.

There is a great deal of bleakness in *Thoughts and Adventures*, but it is relieved and interspersed with light moments also characteristic of the book and of Churchill's thinking. The heart of the book rests in this relationship. In "Painting as a Pastime," for example, he mentions one of the most important things he ever says concerning governance and the capacity that makes one fit for it.

The paragraph comes upon one unawares, which is not the way of Churchill. He is a lovely and clear writer, and in several places he explains that this clarity is the prime feature of good writing. Key to achieving clarity is to write with a clear structure. He learned how to write, he explains, when he learned what a sentence is and then what a paragraph is. He so often writes paragraphs that begin with a thematic statement. "Events then moved quickly" is a common phrase, commonly followed by a series of sentences in the active voice, each describing an event. It is a delight to read such writing. One also gets the point.

Consider then this paragraph from "Painting as a Pastime":

> Just to paint is great fun. The colours are lovely to look at and delicious to squeeze out. Matching them, however crudely, with what you see is fascinating and ab-

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solutely absorbing. Try it if you have not done so—before you die. As one slowly begins to escape from the difficulties of choosing the right colours and laying them on in the right places and in the right way, wider considerations come into view. One begins to see, for instance, that painting a picture is like fighting a battle; and trying to paint a picture is, I suppose, like trying to fight a battle. It is, if anything, more exciting than fighting it successfully. But the principle is the same. It is the same kind of problem, as unfolding a long, sustained, interlocked argument. It is a proposition which, whether of few or numberless parts, is commanded by a single unity of conception. And we think—though I cannot tell—that painting a great picture must require an intellect on the grand scale. There must be that all-embracing view which presents the beginning and the end, the whole and each part, as one instantaneous impression retentively and untiringly held in the mind. When we look at the larger Turners—canvases yards wide and tall—and observe that they are all done in one piece and represent one single second of time, and that every innumerable detail, however small, however distant, however subordinate, is set forth naturally and in its true proportion and relation, without effort, without failure, we must feel in pres-

> ence of an intellectual manifestation the equal in quality and intensity of the finest achievements of warlike action, of forensic argument, or of scientific or philosophical adjudication.

War is like painting, except not so exciting. It involves the same mastery of details, the same ability to render them into an order not apparent to the common mind. And both these capacities, for war making and painting, are like the capacities for argument and for philosophy. Later in the essay, Churchill criticizes the French school of painting for its rebellions against nature; it paints tree trunks with side-to-side- and water with up-and-down strokes. These artists fall "in love with [their] theories" and make "sacrifices of truth to them." Elsewhere in the essay, Churchill explains that if one observes nature "accurately and with refinement...the result follows on the canvas with startling obedience." Obedience to nature is then the guide to the painter, and one assumes, the warrior, the ruler, and the philosopher.

Putting Things Together

James Muller, professor of political science at the University of Alaska and the editor of this book, has done us a service through years of study. This book is, true enough, not among the great narratives of the great statesman Churchill. It is not a narrative at all. It is rather a picture, or perhaps a painting, of how Churchill saw life, and a painting of his own life. He looked out upon a world in which the glories of the age might lead to the destruction of the age. He saw that human making had reached a pitch of perfection never seen before, a pitch so high that it could ameliorate much of the misery of man. But in this effort it could also extinguish the elevated things in man, reduce him from his station as the Lord of Creation, and cut him off from all nature, including his own.

How shall we avoid this evil? The answer is not stated explicitly, but rather implied. It does not come as the announced theme of any essay, or even of any paragraph. One must put things together, as a statesman does when he builds his policies out of the material at hand, when he works by the light that can be found in his place so often away from the sun. Perhaps it is to be found in the soul of a man, and in particular in a certain kind of soul. That kind of soul would be like a painter in its ability to grasp and order details as they shift and change. That kind of soul would be like a painter in its attention to nature, its obedience to the commands found in nature. It would be a seeing kind of soul. It would be assertive and yet also humble before the commands that come from the ultimate sovereign.

One can observe such a soul at work in this book. It is a treasure.

Larry P. Arnn is president of Hillsdale College.

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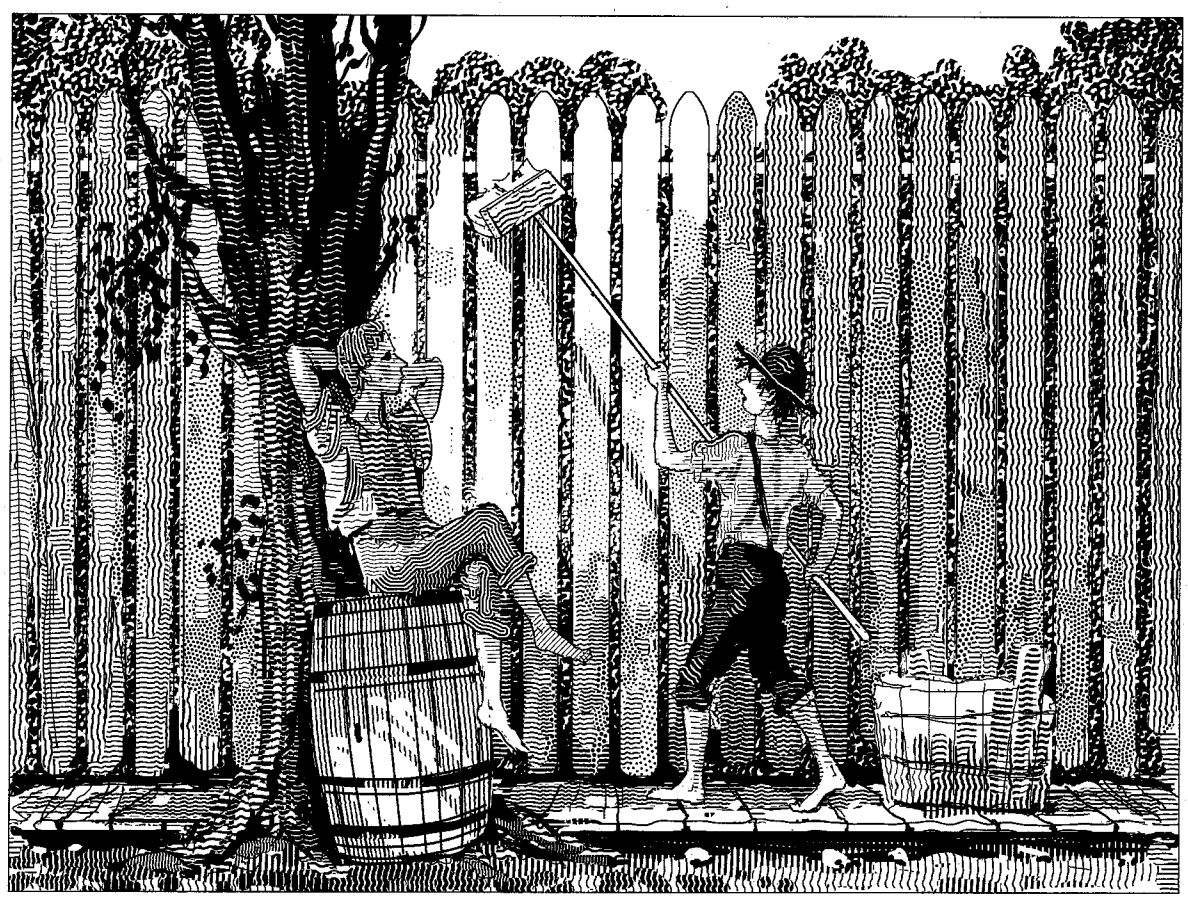
Book Review by William Voegeli

Nice Work if You Can Get It

Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry Into the Value of Work, by Matthew B. Crawford.
The Penguin Press, 246 pages, $25.95

The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work, by Alain de Botton.
Pantheon, 326 pages, $26



Shop Class as Soulcraft and *The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work* are meditations on how paid employment helps and hinders our efforts to fashion good lives. The publishers' bad luck finds the volumes arriving in bookstores during the worst economic downturn since 1945. The latest reports, for example, show that one out of every six Americans is unemployed and looking for work, or out of work and so discouraged by the absence of job opportunities as to have quit trying to find one, or involuntarily working part-time while seeking a full-time position. Millions of people, in other words, would be grateful and relieved to have (or have back) the soul-crushing jobs—on assembly lines, in cubicles, and behind cash registers—lamented by Matthew Crawford and Alain de Botton.

Such basic economic considerations are peripheral to Crawford and de Botton's investigations, which consider work sociologically, psychologically and, above all, philosophically. Crawford has an argument about his topic, and de Botton has an attitude toward it—inquisitive, reflective, and resigned. Both believe that our chances for happiness will be significantly improved by performing, and even losing ourselves in, "work that is genuinely useful and has a certain integrity to it," as Crawford writes.

Unlike Crawford, however, de Botton acknowledges the possibility that expecting fulfillment while earning a living may be fundamentally misbegotten, a way of investing in hopes that will almost never be realized:

> The strangest thing about the world of work is the widespread expectation that our work should make us happy. For thousands of years, work was viewed as something to be done with as rapidly as possible and escaped in the imagination through alcohol or religion. Aristotle was the first of many philosophers to state that no one could be both free and obliged to earn a living.

Given the reality that nearly all of us *are* obliged to earn a living, and wish to be as free and satisfied as we can, careers in the skilled trades are likely to be better for both your net worth and your self-worth, Crawford argues. Citing economist Alan Blinder, he says,

> [T]he crucial distinction in the emerging labor market is not between those with more or less education, but between those whose services can be delivered over a wire and those who must do their work in person or on site. The latter will find their livelihoods more secure against outsourcing to distant countries. As Blinder puts it, 'You can't hammer a nail over the Internet.' Nor can the Indians fix your car. Because they are in India.

The default option pressed on a vast, ever-growing segment of the American population, however, is to "round up every warm body and

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send it to college, then to the cubicle," commencing four or five "enervating" decades as so-called "knowledge workers." The result, writes Crawford, is, "Many of us do work that feels more surreal than real. Working in an office, you often find it difficult to see any tangible result from your efforts. What exactly have you accomplished at the end of any given day?"

By contrast, he says, "people who do work that is straightforwardly useful" satisfy a "basic human need." De Botton agrees, contending that "the longing to act meaningfully in our work seems just as stubborn a part of our make-up as our appetite for status or money." Thus, "the adults who feature in children's books" are "shopkeepers, builders, cooks or farmers—people whose labour can easily be linked to the visible betterment of human life." No such book leads children to dream of becoming regional sales managers or "brand supervision coordinators."

BOTH AUTHORS MAKE ACUTE OBSERVATIONS about the knowledge worker trapped in his cubicle. Crawford earned a doctorate in political philosophy at the University of Chicago before quitting a job at a Washington think tank to open his own motorcycle repair shop in Richmond, Virginia. ("For me, at least, there is more real thinking going on in the bike shop than there was in the think tank.") He notes that, in political terms, the vast modern organization has come to be governed in an inscrutable, baffling manner:

> Given our democratic sensibilities, authority cannot present itself straightforwardly, *as* authority, coming down from a superior, but must be understood as an impersonal thing that emanates vaguely from all of us. So authority becomes smarmy and passive-aggressive, trying to pass itself off as something cooperative and friendly; as volunteerism.

This problem didn't beset the "man in the gray flannel suit" 50 years ago, when deep thinkers worried about a crisis of conformity. Over 16 million Americans served in uniform during World War II. The experience of life in the military, modern nations' least democratic institution, was democratized. An entire generation of American males returned to the civilian world accustomed to giving and taking orders.

Today's manager, shaped by the anti-establishment 1960s rather than the command-and-control 1940s, would be mortified if anyone compared him to a drill sergeant. As a consequence, writes Crawford, "He is not so much a boss as a life coach." Rather than communicate clear, objective goals by which a subordinate's job performance will be evaluated, the manager extols and transmits the "corporate culture," urging and constantly helping "team members" identify with and "buy in" to the organization's "mission." "This higher purpose typically remains on a meta-level, vaguely specified," notes Crawford. "But the absence of specific content to this higher purpose is its main feature. All the moral urgency surrounding it seems to boil down to an imperative to develop a disposition of teaminess." Clear directives to do X but not Y would actually hinder the team member's crucial progress in personal discovery and transformation.

They would, moreover, require the boss to take risks it is crucial for him to avoid. In Crawford's words,

> A manager has to make many decisions for which he is accountable. Unlike an entrepreneur with his own business, however, his decisions can be reversed at any time by someone higher up the food chain (and there is always someone higher up the food chain). It's important for your career that these reversals not look like defeats, and more generally you have to spend a lot of time managing what others think of you. Survival depends on a crucial insight: you can't back down from an argument that you initially made in straightforward language, with moral conviction, without seeming to lose your integrity. So managers learn the art of provisional thinking and feeling, expressed in corporate doublespeak, and cultivate a lack of commitment to their own actions. Nothing is set in concrete the way it is when you are, for example, pouring concrete.

The infuriating absurdity of workplaces shaped by such imperatives was captured by the 1999 movie, *Office Space*. In one scene Joanna, a waitress in a restaurant that emphasizes "atmosphere, attitude, and fun," is confronted by her boss for not wearing enough "flair," buttons on her uniform that say things like, "We're Not In Kansas Anymore." But I'm wearing 15 pieces of flair, she says. Isn't that the minimum? "Now, it's up to you whether or not you want to just do the bare minimum," he tells her. "Look, we want you to express yourself, okay? If you think the bare minimum is enough, then okay. But some people choose to wear more and we encourage that, okay? You do want to express yourself, don't you?"

When, some days later, the waitress is still wearing just 15 buttons, the manager takes her aside: "Let me ask you a question, Joanna. What do you think of a person who only does the bare minimum?" "Let me tell you what I think," she says, struggling to remain composed. "If you want me to wear 37 pieces of flair...then why don't you just make the minimum 37 pieces of flair?" Sidestepping this challenge to issue a direct order, the manager says, "Well, I *thought* I remember you saying you wanted to express yourself." Enraged, the waitress gives him the finger while quitting and storming out, exclaiming, "There's my flair! And this is *me* expressing *myself*."

If *Office Space* were leftwing agit-prop, Joanna would have been the clear proletarian victim, her boss the capitalist villain. But a workplace organized so that no one ever receives or imparts clear commands or standards makes everyone a victim. "With the cold war now safely decided," writes Crawford, "we may consider anew, without a sense of mortal political threat, the Marxian account of alienated labor." The absence of a mortal threat doesn't take us very far, however, in wresting something comprehensible and useable from Marx's account of un-alienated labor. "Supposing that we had produced in a human manner; each of us in his production would have doubly affirmed himself and his fellow men," Marx wrote in his early notebooks. "My work would be a free expression of my life, and therefore a free enjoyment of my life."

A SWISS WRITER NOW LIVING IN LONDON, De Botton also discerns, however, something about the modern work experience that causes workers, even top executives, to negate rather than affirm themselves. At one point in his book, an examination of ten different industries, he spends several days hanging around the European headquarters of "one of the world's largest accountancy firms." Before finally getting a chance to interview the chairman, de Botton observes the same thing as Crawford: "It is by posing as a regular employee that the chairman stands his best chance of preserving his seniority.... [He has] been forced to surrender his right to bark orders. He cannot scold graduates of...Wharton. The one tool left to him is persuasion." And so the chairman travels, several times a month, to one office or another around the world, flattering audiences of thousands of accountants while recommending improvements "in the humble and supplicating manner of a preacher in an age of declining faith."

De Botton's 30-minute interview with the chairman, chaperoned warily by the firm's director of public relations, is revealingly opaque. The chairman gives a writer trying to understand the experience of running a big corporation nothing

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but responses that would fit into one of his PowerPoint assisted pep-talks:

> Does he like travelling? "We are fortunate that we are already part of a successful global business, but we must do more to commit fully to our global organisation and the global market." How does his firm differ from its competitors? "Our people are our brand in our clients' eyes, and a differentiated client experience can only be created through our people living our values."

The author's first reaction is scornful exasperation at being stonewalled by an executive who, being so determined not to say anything, should never have granted the interview to begin with. His second thought, however, is to consider the possibility the chairman is exercising a kind of candor by making it clear that PowerPoint slogans are the only things he has *to* say:

> But perhaps he speaks like this not so much because he wishes to keep secrets as because years of circumnavigating the earth, breathing conditioned air and headlining conferences, have hollowed out his personality. It may have been a decade since he was left alone in a room with nothing to do. I feel my boredom turn to pity for someone who one might otherwise imagine had precious little to be pitied for.

The surrealism of modern economic life extends beyond the employment relationship. Another industry on de Botton's list is "biscuit manufacture." If you imagine that a big company like United Biscuits, "the number-one player in the British biscuit market and its second-largest producer of bagged nuts," comes up with new confections in its kitchens, and then sees if the most appetizing can be priced and sold at levels that will please its shareholders, you need to get out more. "Biscuits are nowadays a branch of psychology, not cooking," he learns.

U.B. launched its "Moments" brand after a two-year development process. The key step was a series of focus groups where marketing experts questioned "low-income mothers" about their lives, "in an attempt to tease out of them certain emotional longings that could subsequently be elaborated into the organising principles behind a new product." Those longings turned out to be for sympathy, affection, and "me-time." U.B.'s brand managers set out to position their new product as one capable of assuaging these desires. This required making decisions about the "width, shape, coating, packaging and name" of the new cookie, since the right combination of these details "can furnish a biscuit with a personality as subtly and appropriately nuanced as that of a protagonist in a great novel."

De Botton finds the extensive division of labor necessary to create and produce a single cookie both impressive and dispiriting. The headquarters staff includes branding executives, packaging technologists, and strategic projects evaluators. "Some had attained extraordinary expertise in the collection and analysis of sales data from supermarkets, while others daily investigated how to ensure a minimum of friction between wafers during transit." The jobs in a Belgian factory that actually produces Moments are just as specialized and arcane. He is led to observe, "The real issue is not whether baking biscuits is meaningful, but the extent to which the activity can seem to be so after it has been continuously stretched and subdivided across five thousand lives and half a dozen different manufacturing sites." United Biscuit employees may gain the satisfaction of doing their varied jobs well, but only at the highest level of abstraction can they imagine themselves to have helped a Moments consumer enjoy some me-time.

Crawford is even more emphatic in arguing that hyper-specialization has led to the "stupidification" of the work experience. The economic success of Henry Ford's production techniques and the popularity of F.W. Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) made the assembly line the paradigm of modern industrialization. "Scattered craft knowledge is concentrated in the hands of the employer," according to Crawford's description of its essence, "then doled out again to workers in the form of minute instructions needed to perform some *part* of what is now a work *process*." That transformation of manual labor is now being visited upon mental labor. He quotes *The Electronic Sweatshop* (1989) by Barbara Garson: "Extraordinary human ingenuity has been used to eliminate the need for human ingenuity." The culmination of this trend is to eliminate the need for human beings altogether, as when TurboTax software captures the activity of preparing a tax return in an elaborate, digitized if-then decision tree. In a chapter titled, "The Separation of Thinking from Doing," Crawford tells us, "the basic logic of the modern economy" is "cognitive stratification."

Even when we do look up from our narrowed- and dumbed-down labors, the ultimate destination visible on the horizon is often disheartening. After de Botton has spent time with United Biscuit employees carrying out various slivers of the vast process that puts Moments on store shelves, "I wondered whether the biscuits might not be part of the very problem that they had been designed to address, whether their production and marketing was not indeed contributing to precisely the feelings of emptiness and nervous tension which they claimed to alleviate." He wonders further "why in our society the greatest sums of money so often tended to accrue from the sale of the least meaningful things," leaving us "experts at swiftly assembling confectionary" while "we were still searching for reliable means of generating emotional stability or marital harmony."

De Botton provides a very red-state rejoinder to his own blue-state line of inquiry:

> [T]here has always been an insurmountable problem facing those countries that ignore the efficient production of chocolate biscuits and sternly dissuade their ablest citizens from spending their lives on the development of innovative marketing promotions: they have been poor, so poor as to be unable to guarantee political stability or take care of their most vulnerable citizens, whom they have lost to famines and epidemics. It is the high-minded countries that have let their members starve, whereas the self-centered and the childish ones have, off the back of their doughnuts and six thousand varieties of ice cream, had the resources to invest in maternity wards and cranial scanning machines.

Crawford has little to say about these macroeconomic realities. "It remains for others, better versed in public policy and shrewder about its unintended consequences," to devise measures that increase our chances of realizing a "humane economy" where "the virtue of independence is cultivated, and a diversity of human types can find work to which they are suited." He declines to be carried away by his own powerful rhetoric into the revolutionary's "exaggerated fantasy of world changing." He chooses, instead, the "Stoic" path of "seeking out the cracks" in the modern economy to find those places "where individual agency and the love of knowledge can be realized today, in one's own life."

Such cracks exist, as the careers of skilled tradesmen attest. The logic of economic progress, however, is apt to make these microeconomic niches, where work offers "prospects for full human flourishing," ever more micro. There was once a time when shops that repaired televisions, radios, and small electric appliances could provide their proprietors with a decent living. Opening such a business today

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would be as shrewd a career decision as becoming a blacksmith or wheelwright. Improvements in quality and reliability, spurred by international economic competition, make today's appliances far more dependable than the ones in our grandparents' houses. They're cheaper, too, which means that when they do break down or wear out it invariably makes more sense to replace than repair them.

For all the manly pride evident in his enthused, detailed discussions of intake manifolds and oil pumps, Crawford's own business has something of the boutique about it. In the first place, Americans' motorcycles are almost always recreational equipment rather than practical necessities, more like sailboats than refrigerators. They are owned by people who drive automobiles, rather than by those who need personal transportation but can't afford cars. Crawford's clients appear to be a subset of connoisseurs within this universe of toy owners. His shop specializes in foreign motorcycles, especially those so old that replacement parts are difficult or impossible to locate. His customers, then, have the desire and means to keep a rare, temperamental bike on the road, while cyclists who can't afford such an indulgence would give it up for a new, easily maintained Yamaha. Both motorcycling in general, then, and the ability to ride away from Crawford's shop on a collector's item are made possible by higher and wider prosperity, a development thoroughly intertwined with the spread of dehumanizing work that he deplores.

The economic viability of Crawford's repair business is similarly hazy, since it is either possible or necessary for him to spend part of his time writing articles and books while serving as a research fellow at the University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture. He argues for a "more integral sort of life" than the one led by the mortgage banker who works hard all year in order to climb Mount Everest on his vacation, accumulating money in the one activity to spend it for the "psychic nourishment" provided by the other. Crawford clearly draws psychic nourishment from fixing old and rare bikes, but whether others in the same business, lacking his rare set of moonlighting opportunities, could derive enough revenue to support a family from such work is an important practical detail *Shop Class as Soulcraft* doesn't address.

Seemingly to remind himself as much as his readers, Crawford occasionally punctuates his reflections on the role of work with observations like, "We are recalled to the basic antagonism of economic life: work is toilsome and necessarily serves someone else's interests. That's why you get paid."

It appears, however, that many of us think differently about this whole getting paid thing than Crawford. Like many philosophers, he believes that people with fewer and simpler needs are generally happier. In the prelapsarian days of capitalism "it was found that when employers would increase the piece rate in order to boost production, it actually had the opposite effect: workers would produce less, as now they could meet their fixed needs with less work." This doesn't sound like a hard problem for the economist—the "backward bending supply curve of labor" is a well-documented phenomenon—or the capitalist, who should welcome the chance to reduce the piece rate to where it had been and end up with more products to sell at a lower cost per unit.

> There was once a time when shops that repaired televisions, radios, and small electric appliances could provide their proprietors with a decent living. Opening such a business today would be as shrewd a career decision as becoming a blacksmith or wheelwright.

What happened instead, argues Crawford, is that the employer class went to extraordinary lengths to foist upon the workers, whose simple wants were easily satisfied, an artificially induced appetite for an endless list of consumption items: "the only way to get [workers] to work harder was to play upon the imagination, stimulating new needs and wants." New links in the chains that tie us to our increasingly degrading jobs were forged when the advent of consumer debt made it possible, even irresistible, to get deeper and deeper in hock and, like Arthur Miller's Willy Loman, spend our lives working desperately to make payments on things that fall apart by the time we finally own them free and clear.

'Tis a gift to be simple and a gift to be free, as the old hymn goes. The argument that economic tyranny has inflicted on us the need not to be simple and, thus, the inability to be free is neither new nor sturdy. In *The Consumer Society* (1970), Jean Baudrillard decried "the system's" determination to saddle us with artificially induced needs to keep us weak and itself steadily more powerful and malevolent. "The industrial system, having socialized the masses as a labor force, was forced to go further, in order to finish the job, and socialize them (which is to say, control them) as a consumption force." His list of self-evidently useless extravagances the system beguiles us into demanding included automobile windshield wipers able to operate at more than one speed.

There is more logic and evidence supporting the proposition that we have consumerism because consumers want it than because it has been insidiously imposed on them. Producing and consuming are directed to our basic biological needs but, because we are political animals, also to our social and psychological ones, which are felt no less acutely. Our understanding of what it means to have the "bare necessities" rises steadily with the advance of prosperity. Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation pointed out in 2007 that 97% of American households officially categorized as poor have a color TV, 89% have microwave ovens, and 80% have air-conditioned homes, something only 36% of all Americans enjoyed as recently as 1970. Nearly three quarters of poor households owned a car, he says, and 31% had two or more.

As the poverty threshold keeps inching up, so does the minimum level that defines respectable affluence. This problem is compounded by the inherently comparative, even competitive, nature of so much modern economic activity. In *The Social Limits to Growth* (1976), Fred Hirsch distinguished between material goods, like color televisions or air conditioners, and "positional" goods. The supply of material goods can be expanded indefinitely, but positional goods, like homes in the most desirable neighborhoods or degrees from prestigious colleges, are inherently scarce—if everybody could acquire them then what makes them worth acquiring would be lost. At the dawn of the modern economic era John Locke praised the multiplication of material goods: "a king of a large and fruitful territory [in America] feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day-labourer in England." That economic advance has led us to expect the similar mass-production of positional goods, which guarantees disappointment. As Hirsch wrote, "What the wealthy have today can no longer be delivered to the rest of us tomorrow; yet as we individually grow richer, that is what we expect."

Furthermore, as Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter argue in *Nation of Rebels* (2004), many material goods are also, in part, positional goods that carry a "competitive premium." A popular

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new restaurant with lines of people waiting to get in is likely to raise its prices to take advantage of the high demand for what it sells. One portion of each diner's bill will cover the material goods and services provided, and another will reflect the positional premium created by people on the waiting list who bid up the price of getting a table.

The per-square-foot cost of an apartment on the Upper East Side of Manhattan can be ten times higher than the market value of many houses around the country—not because it is ten times better appointed, but because the competitive premium created by people who want to live in one of the city's most sought-after neighborhoods is priced in. A couple squeezed into a million-dollar, one-bedroom condo may sincerely prize being able to walk to Central Park and the Met for its own sake, rather than because they like to brag about it to their outer-borough or fly-over-country friends. Their straightforward preference will, nevertheless, require them to commit as unreservedly to their lucrative careers as if their sole motive were the invidious desire to keep a tax-bracket ahead of the Joneses.

To secede from the positional economy is, then, a more complex matter than renouncing snobbery and status anxiety. It's very hard to undertake or assess economic activities out of context. (Cornell economist Robert H. Frank reminds us that H.L. Mencken defined a rich man as one who earns $100 a year more than his wife's sister's husband.) Moreover, the decline of governmental competence and social capital means that many "private" consumption decisions are driven by external realities. If the homes in a metropolitan area that a family can easily afford are in sketchy neighborhoods with mediocre public schools, status concerns will have nothing to do with their decision to buy, in a different neighborhood, a house that is more expensive, bigger, and fancier than they really want—and the resulting decision to tough it out in a depressing job rather than pursue less lucrative work in a more satisfying career.

Working and consuming, making money and spending it, are not only inextricably linked, but related in complex and counter-intuitive ways. Journalist Jonathan Foreman wrote an article 12 years ago describing his previous career as a lawyer in one of those Wall Street firms where, in a typical week, associates log more hours at work than most people spend being awake:

> [T]o make the life bearable, you found yourself spending a lot of money. After a particularly long and dreary project, or a humiliating interaction with someone of higher rank, I would often slip out to buy myself a little present, perhaps another Ferragamo tie. It's a way of reminding yourself that despite your misery you are a highly paid professional: you may feel like a serf, but you can afford to spend $80 on a beautiful strip of silk. This becomes a way of life. Some people eat chocolate to make themselves feel better; lawyers buy stuff. As they claw their way up the ladder, they buy more and more. Before they know it, they cannot imagine living without an enormous salary.

Foreman offers an extreme but not particularly rare instance of what Leo Strauss called the "joyless quest for joy." Work is no longer the means and consumption the end. Consumption becomes the means to validate the end, to keep at bay all thoughts that the decision to spend three years in a law school whose name your parents eagerly mentioned to their friends, and run up over $100,000 in student loans, might have been a huge mistake.

In an earlier book, *Status Anxiety* (2004), de Botton chronicled how work was revolutionized by the modern economic transformation:

> In 1800, just 20 percent of American workers had an employer other than themselves; by 1900, the figure was up to 50 percent, and by 2000, 90 percent. Employers were also getting larger: whereas in 1800, less than 1 percent of the American workforce was employed in an organisation having five hundred or more employees, by 2000, the figure stood at 55 percent.

It has become much harder, then, but for that reason much more important, to remember that in the final analysis we are all self-employed, each the sole proprietor of his own Me, Inc. We take that self to the market, trying to find the best terms on which to sell what we have and do, and provide what others want. Some of us wind up corporate vice presidents and some paint houses, but all of us wind up making choices and living with them.

Crawford disavows reforming or regulating the markets for our labor and de Botton never expresses any interest in the subject. Their advice is that for our self-employment to make us happy, or at least reduce the likelihood and severity of our unhappiness, we need to know that self as well as we can, and assess the markets we confront as shrewdly and knowledgeably as possible. What are our talents and aversions? What are our tolerance levels for work that involves tedium, or carries the risk of physical danger or public humiliation? What tradeoffs are we prepared to make between job satisfaction and financial compensation, and which would be intolerable? What are the kinds of work we can most readily imagine ourselves getting lost in and being proud of? Do we see ourselves being successful and happy as "alpinists of organisational pyramids," in de Botton's phrase, or does the prospect fill us with despair?

Such questions are unlikely to issue in a tidy recipe that leads to a successful career and happy life. But failing to ask them leaves us at the mercy of the default options presented by the market, and by the educators and career counselors, options that can be as lamentable when they are devised by people who think they have our best interests at heart as when they issue from people who certainly do not. Such reflections increase the likelihood that, in de Botton's words:

> Our work will at least have distracted us, it will have provided a perfect bubble in which to invest our hopes for perfection, it will have focused our immeasurable anxieties on a few relatively small-scale and achievable goals, it will have given us a sense of mastery, it will have made us respectably tired, it will have put food on the table. It will have kept us out of greater trouble.

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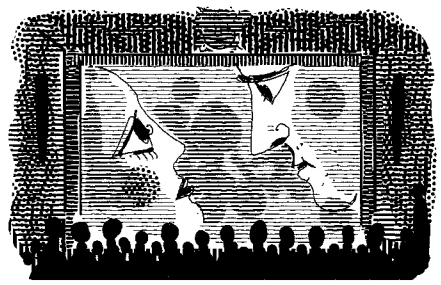
SHADOW PLAY
by Martha Bayles



Animation and Aspiration

HOLLYWOOD IS HAVING A FAT YEAR, LURing audiences away from video games and home entertainment systems with big-screen spectacles recalling the heady days when sound (or color, or Cinerama) was introduced. Part of the lure is motion capture: a form of computer-generated (CG) animation that records the bodily movements and facial expressions of human actors, then transfers them to invented characters, such as 10-foot-tall extraterrestrials with blue skin, feline features, and long tails.

I refer, of course, to the Na'vi, the non-human heroes of director James Cameron's juggernaut hit, *Avatar*. Photographs cannot do justice to these creatures, because what is most striking about them is their utterly fantastical appearance combined with their utterly lifelike mobility. This isn't makeup, folks. Nor is it Mickey Mouse.

As many have noted, the plot of *Avatar* resembles that of a 1992 animated film called *FernGully*. But visually the two could not be more different, because along with motion capture, *Avatar* uses another cutting-edge CG technology: software able to generate a three-dimensional world, a virtual space through which a virtual camera can move with complete freedom. (Like a video game, only several gigabytes richer.)

By this means, we are transported to Pandora, a lush inhabited moon in a remote planetary system, whose exotic flora and fauna glow at night like the Sugar Plum Fairy in Vegas, and whose skies are festooned with "floating mountains" lifted from a Song Dynasty scroll. Project all this in 3-D onto an Imax screen, and you have the main reason why *Avatar* has become the top-grossing movie of all time, breaking the $1.8 billion record set by Cameron's 1997 blockbuster, *Titanic*.

Another film released over the holidays uses similar technology: *Disney's A Christmas Carol*. (Although Charles Dickens gets screen credit for the "story," the big credits, for writing, producing, and directing, all go to Robert Zemeckis, CEO of ImageMovers Digital, a division of the Walt Disney Company.) But the characters, notably Ebenezer Scrooge and the three ghosts, motion-captured from actor Jim Carrey, are all too familiar. And so is the virtual world: 19th-century London, prettified in the manner of Hallmark cards and mass-produced paintings by Thomas Kincaid. No wonder *Carol* has grossed a mere fraction of *Avatar*'s haul.

Highbrow Animation

GEORGE LUCAS, THE CREATOR OF *STAR Wars*, once quipped, "Creating a universe is daunting." This is true, as anyone can tell from a quick perusal of the book of Genesis. But for animators, being daunted does not pay. From the painstakingly hand-drawn classics of Walt Disney to the latest CG bells and whistles, the prizes in this realm go to the boldest, most obsessed visionaries. Animation begins in comedy, but by its very nature, it aspires to higher things.

Walt Disney is the prime example. By the mid-1930s, his studio was the world's leading supplier of the "cartoon shorts" shown in movie theaters, but already he was dreaming of producing the first full-length animated feature. That project, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), was the *Avatar* of its day, in terms of labor, stress, cost overruns, missed deadlines, and predictions of disaster. It was also, like *Avatar*, a triumph. The public loved it; Cecil B. DeMille sent a congratulatory telegram; reviewers across the political spectrum praised not just its cartoon silliness (the dwarfs, the cute forest critters) but also its artistic seriousness (the music, the evil queen, the scenes of terror in the forest).

These kudos went to Disney's head, apparently, because while overseeing his next two features, *Pinocchio* (1940) and *Bambi* (1942), he began to dream again—only this time of producing a genuine "highbrow" work of art. Encouraging him were two cultural celebrities: Leopold Stokowski, the conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra; and Deems Taylor, the composer and critic. The result was *Fantasia*, a series of animated shorts set to classical music that debuted in New York in 1940.

To judge by Neal Gabler's biography, Disney was so devoted to *Fantasia* that when it failed to impress the elite cultural establishment, he was crushed. Some critics praised the film's ambition, but overall, the reaction was withering, especially toward the segment which illustrates Beethoven's Sixth Symphony with scenes from Greek mythology—centaurs, fauns, and nymphs—cavorting in a style that can only be described as Disneyesque. Gabler reports that a careless remark by Disney—"This thing will make Beethoven!"—was used "to lacerate him for his alleged philistinism."

The trouble is, not all of Disney's philistinism was alleged. I hate to knock *Fantasia*, because I admire certain segments, especially the one based on Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite." But as Richard Schickel commented shortly after Disney's death in 1966, Disney's response to the criticism was not that of a "genuine artist [who] sees his failures...as instructive experiences," but rather a defensive withdrawal. When *Fantasia* sputtered at the box office (due, some say, to cuts by the distributor), Disney turned definitively away from elite culture: "We're getting back to straight line stuff, like 'Donald Duck' and the 'Pigs'."

Of course, some animators never left the "straight line stuff." In striking contrast to *Fantasia* was the consistent production of cartoon shorts by such Disney rivals as the Fleischer

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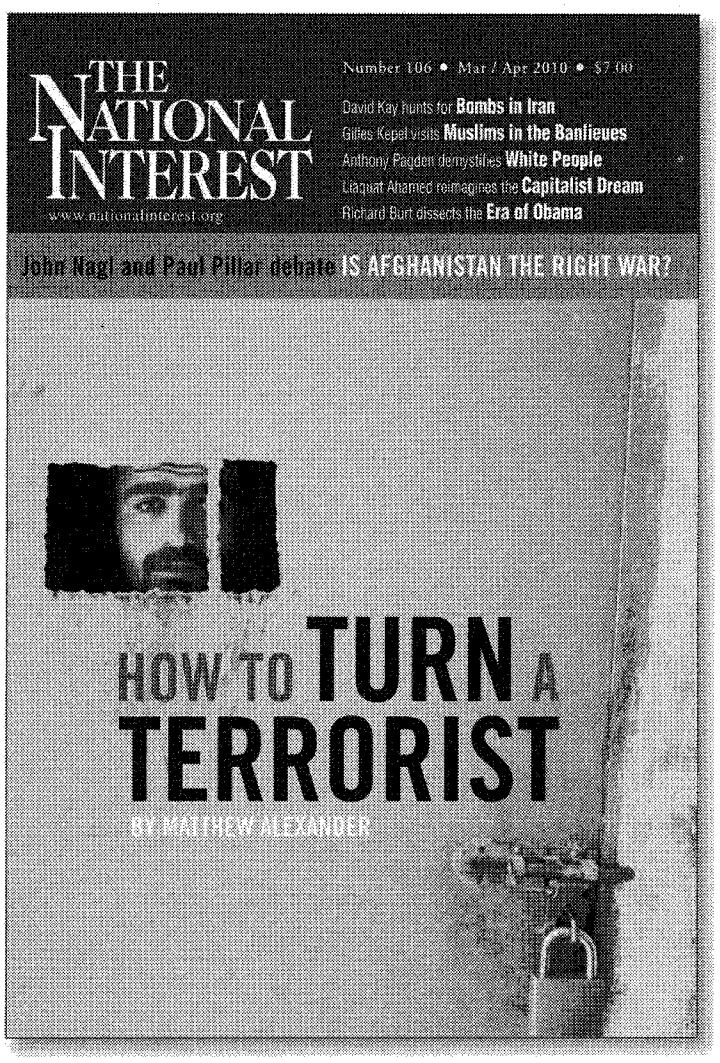

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Studios (creators of Betty Boop and Popeye) and Warner Brothers (home of Wile E. Coyote and Bugs Bunny). To measure the difference, just try to imagine Popeye or Bugs joining Jiminy Cricket in a chorus of "When You Wish Upon a Star"!

Similarly, United Productions of America (UPA), a studio founded in 1944 by disaffected Disney employees, spurned Disney's commitment to visual realism and depth. These were men who had borne witness to such heroic Disney efforts as the multiplane camera, a tall contraption with a camera mounted at the top, used to photograph downward through several glass plates, the highest plates painted with the foreground of a scene, the middle ones with the moving characters, and the lowest ones with the background. Rejecting all that, and adopting the modernist preoccupation with "flatness," UPA developed the herky-jerky style of "limited animation" that gave the world *Mr. Magoo* and the many popular TV series of Hanna-Barbera (*Tom and Jerry, The Flintstones, Yogi Bear, The Smurfs*). Today the same deliberately simplified style is found in such diverse programs as *South Park*, *SpongeBob Squarepants*, and (in a class by itself) *The Simpsons*.

None of these rivals has come anywhere near the commercial success of the Walt Disney Company, now the world's largest media corporation. Some would argue this has less to do with Disney's lofty aspirations than with the company's brilliant, some would say ruthless, business practices. When it comes to diversifying product, fostering synergy, and dominating global marketing and distribution, Disney still knows how to stay one jump ahead of the competition.

This is true even though Disney missed the first bite of the computer-generated apple, firing a young animator named John Lasseter when he tried to introduce CG in the early 1980s. Since then, of course, Disney has corrected that mistake. Since 1991 it has done business with Pixar, the company Lasseter founded after he was fired; and in 2006 Disney bought Pixar for $7.4 billion. Also used by Dreamworks, Sony, and Warner Brothers, the Pixar style of CG animation has yielded a string of hits—*Shrek*, *Ice Age*, *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles*, *Ratatouille*, *WallE*, *Up*—that make all other forms of animation look obsolete.

Yet the Pixar style is not just a look, it's an attitude: irreverence carried as far the market will bear, and no farther. As in *The Simpsons*, each satirical barb in a Pixar-style film is tipped with the honey of whatever sentiment is appropriate to the target. For example, when the target is family, outrageous betrayal is allowed as long as it doesn't disrupt the basic bonds. Far be it from

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me to criticize such a winning formula. But it's basically a comedy formula, and as evidenced by the life of Walt Disney, the creative freedom promised by animation tempts the most gifted practitioners to reach higher.

Faiths, Old and New

WHAT DOES REACHING HIGHER MEAN in 2010? For the answer, look again at *Fantasia*, which along with artistic ambition displayed religious aspiration. In 1940 it was not uncommon to see Christian, especially Catholic themes in Hollywood films. So the ending of *Fantasia*—a vision of satanic revelry set to Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain," followed by a procession of candle-bearing worshipers into a cathedral of trees set to Schubert's "Ave Maria"—attracted little comment. Yet as noted by journalist Mark Pinsky, this was "the most explicitly religious sequence in any Disney feature until *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*," released in 1996.

This means that for the last half-century the Disney corporation has been airbrushing religion out of the Magic Kingdom. From the black magic in *Snow White* to the voodoo in *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), the supernatural in Disney consists of folklore and magic, not miracles and faith. As Pinsky points out, some Christian evangelicals regard this as sacrilege. But as he also argues, the "Disney Gospel" of "dreaming, wishing, hard work, love and self-sacrifice" is made up of equal parts American Dream and biblical ethics.

Pinsky makes the further point that while Disney "always called himself a Christian," he also "insisted that any narrow portrayal of Protestant Christianity (or any religion, for that matter)...was box-office poison, especially in lucrative, overseas markets." The prescience of that comment is borne out today, as Hollywood earns two-thirds of its revenue overseas and gazes hungrily at huge potential markets in India and China. Given the global nature of today's audience, the need to avoid "narrow portrayals" is greater than ever. And this goes double for animators with lofty aspirations.

Does this mean the future is reflected in the wide golden eyes of the Na'vi? The top brass at Sony, Dreamworks, even Fox (which begrudgingly bankrolled *Avatar*) are not announcing any more $500 million productions. This may change, as *Avatar* breaks box-office records in country after country. But if the major studios do launch a new project on this scale, they had better heed the real lesson of *Avatar*, which is less about money and technology than about a new belief system replacing the Disney Gospel.

New York Times columnist Ross Douthat calls this new belief system "pantheism" and belittles it as "Hollywood's religion of choice." But because he focuses exclusively on America, he misses the most important source of this creed: the master of Japanese animation, Hayao Miyazaki.

Miyazaki came of age in U.S.-occupied Japan but does not claim Disney as an influence. Instead, he points to European animation, which has always resided more comfortably (if less lucratively) in the realm of fine art. And despite his friendship with Lasseter (who arranged a cushy distribution deal with Disney), the 69-year-old Miyazaki is hardly about to go Hollywood. On the contrary, his lyrical, hand-drawn work draws most of its inspiration from Shinto, the traditional Japanese animism, with its belief in *kami*, spirits that dwell in nature, symbolize the virtues, and represent the ancestors.

This animism blends seamlessly with environmentalism in many Miyazaki films. For example, *Princess Mononoke* (1997) is about spirit-animals defending a primeval forest against a rapacious mining company (basically the same plot as *Avatar*). In *Spirited Away*, winner of the 2003 Academy Award for Best Animated Feature, the "stink spirit" of a polluted river cries out to be cleansed.

The great advantage of this new belief system is its universality: every government on earth gives lip service, at least, to preserving the natural environment; and every culture possesses a repository of folklore used to entertain children and teach them valuable lessons. To call this "pantheism" is to join the ranks of those who would condemn the fairies, gnomes, and talking animals in Disney.

Most likely, there's a political motive behind Douthat's animus against animistic animation. In *Avatar*, Pandora is despoiled by a 22nd-century version of a greedy American corporation backed up by brutal American mercenaries. The human hero is a former Marine, but his heroism consists of going native and leading the Na'vi in a successful insurgency. These references are so heavy-handed, one wonders if Cameron and his fans are aware that the Taliban and al-Qaeda are not peaceful tree-worshipers; or that American soldiers fighting and dying in Afghanistan and Iraq do not deserve to be caricatured as goons.

State-of-the-Art Propaganda?

WILL THIS GLIB ANTI-AMERICANISM become part of animation's new belief system? It's hard to predict. But for the sake of argument, let's say it doesn't, and the next generation of spectacular films is based on the Gospel of Miyazaki without the Michael Moore overlay. Would that be such a bad thing?

It depends on the alternative. The worldwide religious resurgence of the last 50 years has been a good thing in many ways. But it has also led to the transmogrification of faith into extremist ideology. What would happen if one of these extremist movements got their hands on the money, technology, and expertise to produce *Avatar*-quality propaganda?

Here's one possible scenario. *Avatar* is Sanskrit for "descent" or "appearance"—the earthly manifestation of a Hindu deity. One of the first films to reach India was *Vie et Passion du Christ* (1903), a French silent film with state-of-the-art special effects such as color (hand applied) and splicing to make divine beings such as the Angel of the Annunciation miraculously appear and disappear. So impressed was a Bombay printer named Dadasaheb Phalke, he vowed to do the same for the Hindu gods.

Today Phalke is revered as the father of Indian cinema, and the making of his first major film, *Raja Harishchandra* (1913), is the subject of *Harishchandrachi Factory*, India's entry for Best Foreign Film at the 2009 Academy Awards. This new film is a light-hearted comedy that avoids the freighted topic of religion. But that doesn't change the fact that Phalke adapted his story from the Hindu epic the *Mahabharata*. The Hindu roots of Indian cinema run deep, and right now there are quite a few Hindu extremists who would like to turn that country's prolific film industry into a propaganda machine.

To its credit, Bollywood has avoided taking sides in the current culture war between extremist Hindus and Muslims. Some leading figures, such as director Yash Chopra and actor Shah Rukh Khan, have made films urging religious tolerance and reconciliation between India and Pakistan. But others have stooped to anti-Muslim stereotyping. And as the industry acquires more technical expertise from its partners in Hollywood, the likelihood grows that this kind of propaganda could become more powerful and sophisticated.

Needless to say, there are also plenty of Islamist extremists who would happily return the compliment, using cutting-edge special effects to foment hatred against all infidels, including Christians and Jews. One barrier might be the Islamic stricture against graven images. But barriers can be gotten around, if the atmosphere is sufficiently heated. In volatile conflicts such as the Indian-Pakistani dispute over Kashmir, what better way to rally the masses than with the entertainment equivalent of the nuclear bomb? Compared with such a prospect, the Gospel of Miyazaki looks downright benign.

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PARTHIAN SHOT
by Mark Helprin

The Fate of the Raptor

CANCELLING THE F-22 RAPTOR, THE MOST CAPABLE FIGHTER PLANE ever produced, is yet another act in the tragedy of a nation that, bankrupting itself, embracing moral decline, and apologizing to its enemies, is losing the will to prevail. In pursuit of false prosperities, America for three presidencies and an entire generation has diminished its arsenals, unbalanced its military, and forgotten its genius for strategy.

The campaigns in the Middle East have been like a knife cutting through water, leaving behind the ineluctable infill of countries as divided, unstable, and hostile to our interests as on the day we decided to remake them in our image. Nonetheless, we have recalibrated the armed forces to deal with perhaps a division's worth of fluid irregulars worldwide, thus granting China, Russia, and Iran military holidays in which to redirect the balance of power.

Suppressing terrorism should not come at the expense of conventional forces but rather as a necessary and additional obligation to be accomplished with the left hand as the right is made stronger. The penalty for avoiding this will be Chinese military parity, Russia again a threat to Europe, a nuclear-armed Iran, and one country after another free to invade its neighbors, massacre its peoples, or launch pirates upon the sea.

Amid such static one thing stands out. As we rapidly disarm, China is just as rapidly arming. Perhaps because Americans do not play much chess we seem not to understand that a nation can be defeated without war, that after failing in the art of balance and maneuver the king may still stand, but motionlessly in check, "soft power" notwithstanding. "Soft power" in the absence of hard power is like flesh without a skeleton.

With self-destructive enthusiasm disguised as reasonableness, we now court costs of a future war (or defeat by maneuver) far greater than those of preparation or deterrence—in this economy or any other. Despite the Pacific interface with China, our fleet is smaller than at any time since 1916, and potentially halved due to China's physical control of the Panama Canal. The second President Bush built fewer ships than even his feckless predecessor. In abandoning effective missile defense and decimating the nuclear arsenal, we invite proliferation among the minor players, and, after half a century, are making a first strike by the major ones feasible once again. This year, the Air Force will keep 150 fighters in all of Europe, as at one time, while it declined but before it burned, Rome kept only a shadow of legions upon the Rhine and Danube.

In the very long list of such things is the F-22. Its stealth, speed, agility, and advanced sensors are such that in a 2006 exercise against F-15s, F-16s, and F-18s, the F-22, its pilots scarcely accustomed to it, scored 241 kills to 2. Famously, before its opponents know it's there, their aircraft are exploding. Former USAF Lt. Colonel Joseph Sussingham, F-16 Experimental Command Pilot, put it best: "To face a flight of F-22s is to face a wall of death."

The average age of air force fighter planes more than doubled from 1960 to 1990 and is fast increasing. As the number of combat wings was nearly halved, and the U-2 and F-117 were eliminated in its anticipation, the F-22 became the keystone of American air power. With no new fighter on the horizon other than the F-35, it was as well a guarantee against placing every egg in one basket.

THE ORIGINAL F-22 REQUIREMENT OF 750 AIRCRAFT HAS FARED POORLY over past administrations: George H.W. Bush, 680; Bill Clinton's first term, 442; Clinton's second, 339; George W. Bush's first term, 381; Bush's second, 183. President Obama inherited 186 as a result of Congressional insistence, and the production lines are now to be dismantled. The death of the Raptor is encompassed in the statement of the air force chief of staff, with what irony one can imagine, that "[t]he Department of Defense provided guidance…to eliminate excessive overmatch in our tactical fighter force." In a triumph of international cooperation, China, which will field its own fifth-generation fighter in 2018 or 2020, is eager to help us eliminate excessive overmatch, as are Russia and even India.

We scrapped the F-22 in favor of a single strike fighter (in three variants) for all the services, the F-35, which despite major technical problems is scandalously slated to go into production before it is fully tested. A lesser airplane, it has neither the speed, range, nor electronic capabilities of the F-22. Who needs speed? With munitions spent amidst a swarm of enemy fighters, speed allows the survival of aircraft and pilot. And the F-22's other characteristics superior to the F-35's mean that when its munitions are spent there may not even be a swarm of enemy fighters.

We have thrown away our best aircraft, as we have—directly or by attrition—discarded good ships, armor, and fighting echelons. We have closed production lines, dispersed the skilled people who run them, and weakened the defense industrial base to the point that in a national emergency it cannot revive. Even the late Senator Kennedy, hardly a hawk, called the death of the F-22 "ill-advised and premature."

Given that the administration and Congress throw panicked trillions at programs thought up on the spur of the moment, their parsimony in defense of the United States is unjustifiable, even if our brilliant elites simply refuse to contrast the supposed savings to the costs of future wars that otherwise might be prevented. Though the price may be steep for the times, the price of war undeterred, should it be lost or even should it be won, will perhaps be unbearable.

And because it is a price not only in dollars but in the life of a nation and the blood of its sons and daughters, it is necessary to speak without embarrassment for the defense of the United States and for the rightful preparation to deter war or to win it.

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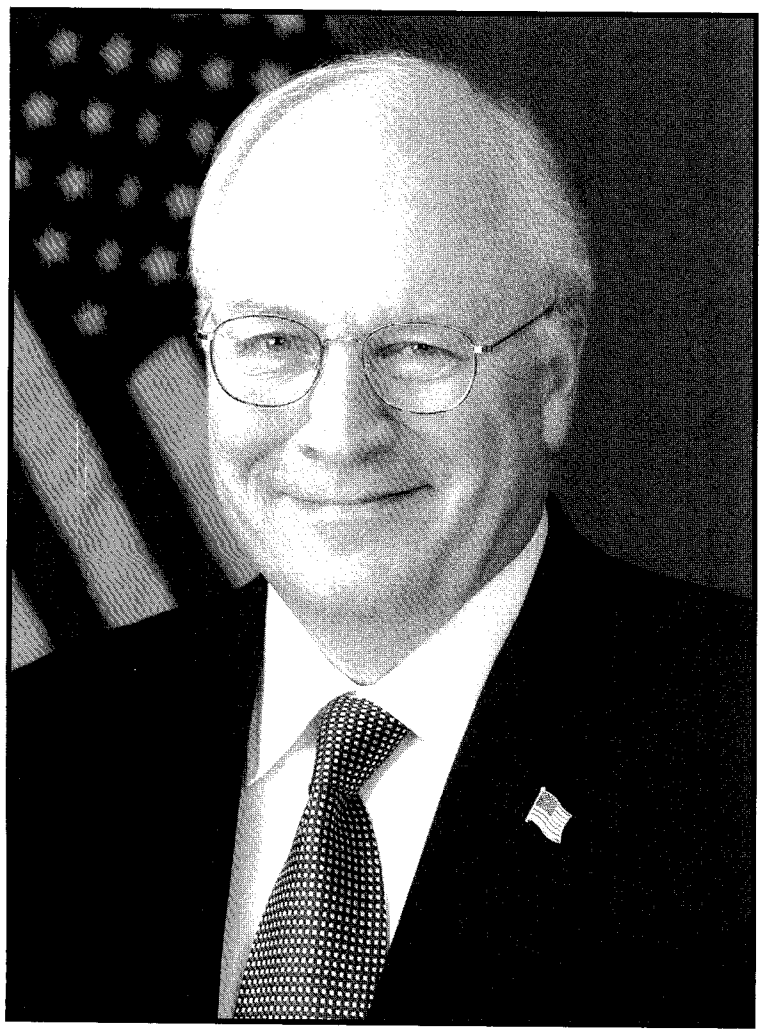

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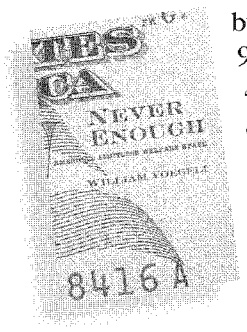

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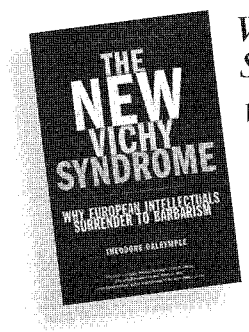

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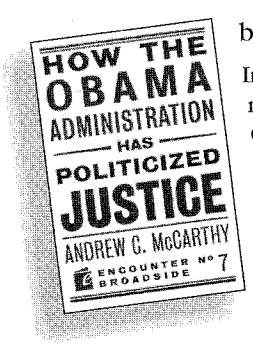

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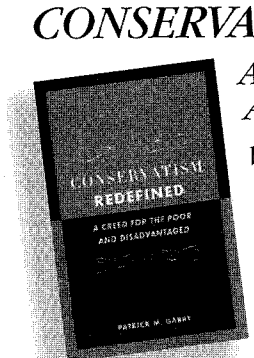

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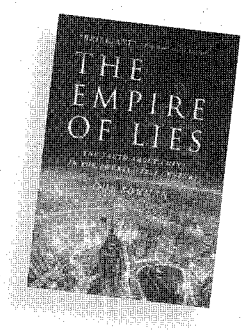

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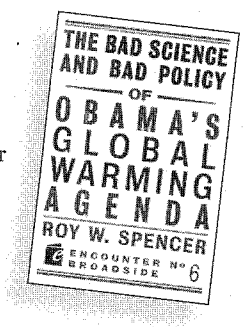

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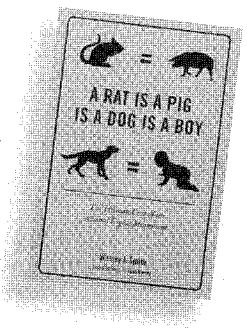

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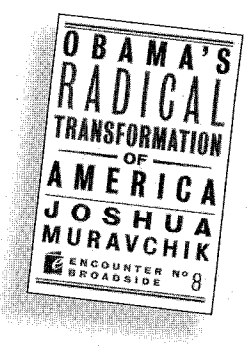

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